

## Descending stairs safely

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On one of our Members' vessels, an observation was raised relating to the hazards associated with steep stairs.

The subject is worthy of a timely reminder for us all. There are diverse international standards and references for stairs.

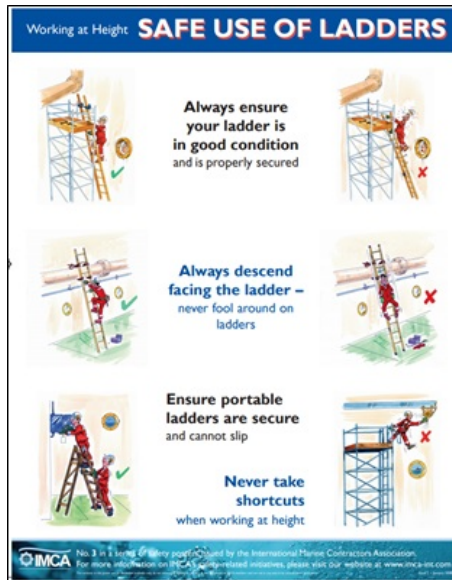
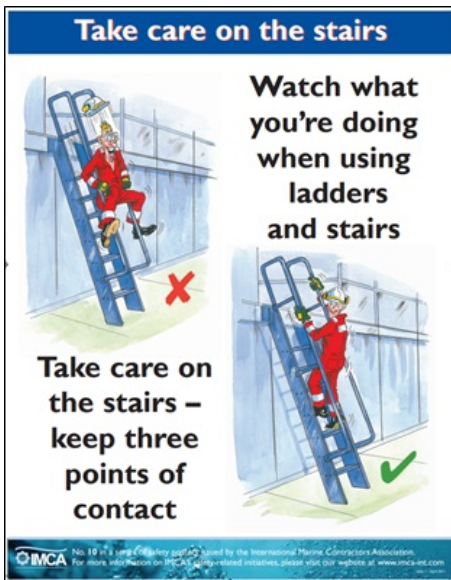
For example, the United States' OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) defines that all ship stairs (or ship ladders) *"between 60 and 90 degrees, be device-facing, so any ship's ladder that is angled 60 degrees or steeper must be descended backing down"*.

Our Member then developed local guidance, including:

- general cleaning and surface requirements for stairs
- correct use of the handrails
- attention to correct PPE – use of safety footwear
- adequate technique – "Trailing hand" for typical descent; and "Descending backwards" (face-in) for steep stairs.



Members may wish to revisit or re-use the IMCA posters on safe use of stairs and ladders:



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