

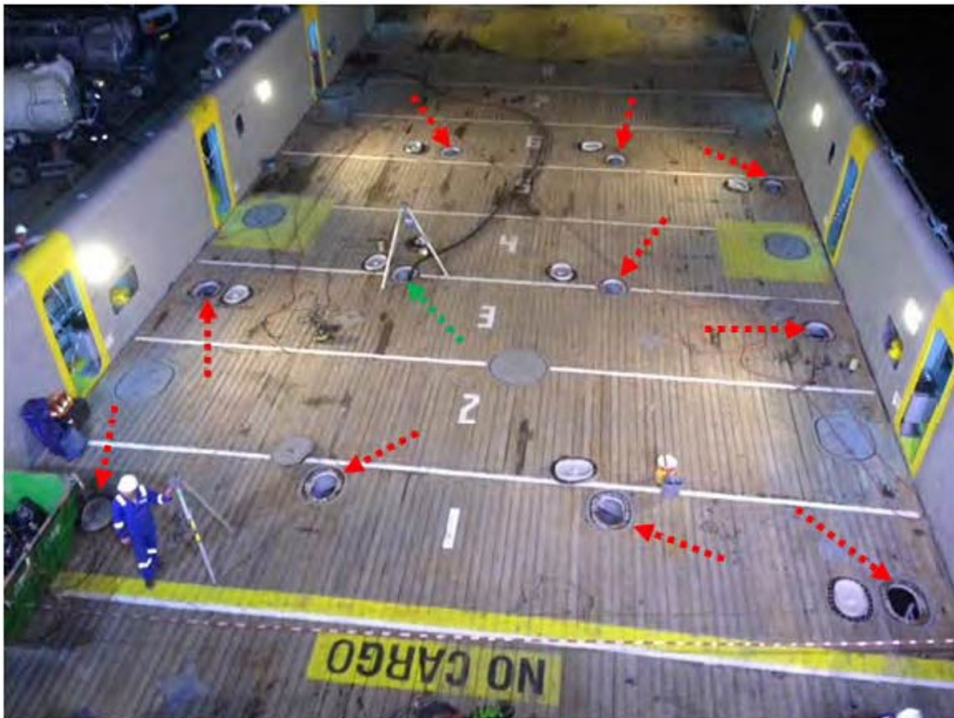
## Near-miss: Open hatches left without barriers

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A Member has reported a near miss incident in which a number of hatches on deck were left open without any form of barrier, creating the potential for injury if persons were to fall down the hatches.

### What happened?

The incident occurred during 'routine' tank cleaning operations carried out by an authorized tank cleaning contractor on board a supply vessel. During night shift vessel inspection and tank cleaning operation monitoring, 10 tank hatches were observed open and left uncontrolled (potential to fall into the manhole for some employees working near the open hatches).



Initial investigation revealed that 11 diesel tank hatches were opened and gas tested; the 10 hatches were left open for ventilation without any protection/control measures or any barriers for each hatch. The overall area was barricaded off by tape by the tank cleaning contractor with a single standby person allocated on deck.

### Our member noted the following:

- 10 hatches were left open for ventilation without any barriers.
- There were no additional control measures in place, except a verbal caution

- during the toolbox talk about the risk of falling into the open hatches.
- The unsafe condition was neither identified nor challenged by any personnel from the contractor or from the vessel crew.

## **Our member took the following actions:**

- Tank cleaning operations were stopped for the moment.
- A safety stand-down was conducted with emphasis on the potential hazards and the requirement to be vigilant and initiate a stop work authority for any unsafe conditions identified.
- Further thorough review of task risk assessment and procedures for tank cleaning and other dangerous space entry activities – with consideration of better management of the open hatches.
- Further clarification of roles and responsibilities during simultaneous operations (SIMOPS) and during tank cleaning.
- Barriers and vented grating ordered for all vessels in fleet.

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