

“Don’t forget about gangways” – USCG: Pilot Dies in Gangway Accident

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The United States Coast Guard (USCG) has published [Safety Alert 14-18](#) regarding a fatal gangway accident

The United States Coast Guard (USCG) has published [Safety Alert 14-18](#) regarding a fatal gangway accident.

Whilst boarding, the gangway separated from the vessel and two individuals fell into the water. Investigations into this incident are still taking place, however it is a reminder that everyday equipment on board vessels can become hazardous when boarding and departing.

Risks and hazards need to be properly recognised and appropriately mitigated on commercial vessels. Hazards can be presented by:

- rotating machinery
- electrical systems
- severe weather or potential fire.

Mariners could become complacent in recognising hazards, and therefore not appreciate the hazards that a gangway could present. Some organisations have recognised the risk of injury and/or fatality, and have appropriately developed gangway safety standards, requirements and best practices to be implemented on board.

The USCG have named the following as having put forward requirements and best practices to improve gangway safety:

- [Occupational Safety and Health Administration \(OSHA\)](#)
- [International Maritime Organization \(IMO\)](#)
- [Protection and Indemnity Clubs](#)
- [Owners and Operators](#)
- [Others](#).

Due to the above-mentioned fatality, the USCG has strongly recommended:

- “Owners and operators, captains and mates review and implement the best practices as presented in the above links and comply with all the regulations applicable to your vessel;
- For vessel pilots, crews, vendors, or anyone boarding or departing a vessel, condition yourself to take a moment to examine the gangway, accommodation or pilot ladder. Look for potential hazards or deficiencies and report them to

IOGP Life Saving Rules:



Bypassing safety controls

senior personnel on board the vessel.”

The USCG notes: *never assume that a gangway crossing is ‘routine’ – if there are any concerns regarding the safety of a crossing, do not cross – report your concerns.*

The full safety alert can be found on the [USCG website](#).

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