



GOOD CATCH from **The American Club**

Not So Fast! GANGWAY INJURY

Description

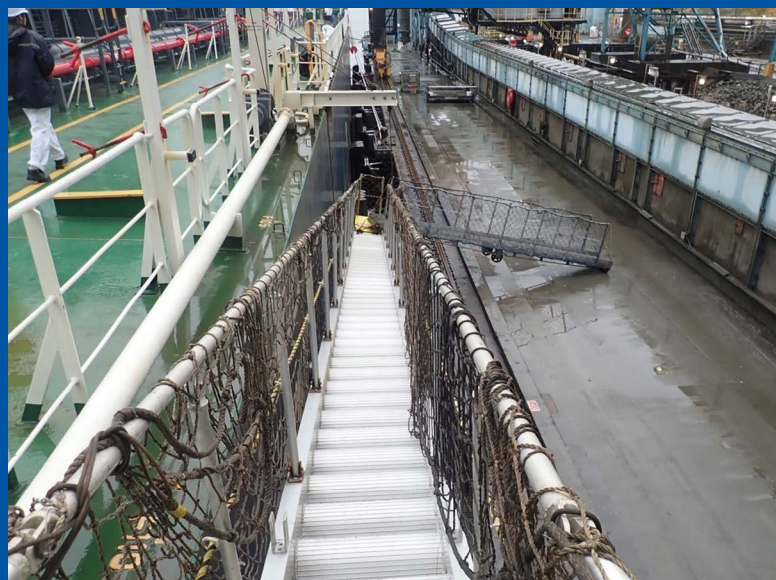
A large bulk carrier was preparing to get underway. Cargo operations were complete and the tugs had just arrived. The crew was working quickly in preparation for getting underway. The pilot was expected momentarily and would be boarding from the pier.

In this port, a short gangway was supplied by the port to bridge the gap between the bottom of the accommodation ladder and the pier. Even though the pilot had not yet arrived, the crew disconnected the short gangway and pushed it back onto the pier. That left the bottom of the accommodation ladder just over 3 feet (1 meter) higher than the pier and about the same distance off the pier. The crew had also already removed the netting from under the accommodation ladder. They did not want to cause the ship to get underway late!

The Master and Chief Officer were focused on their tasks to get underway. The Chief Officer was doing the final stability calculations and the Master was finishing a report for the company. The mate on watch was making a round to double-check that the garbage storage area was secured, the cargo hatches were properly closed and the cleats were properly adjusted.

When the pilot arrived on the pier, he saw that the gap between the pier and the bottom of the accommodation ladder was too large for him to safely cross. He yelled to the watchstander at the top of the accommodation ladder but could not make himself understood. He wanted the crew to adjust the accommodation ladder so he could safely board the ship. After several minutes of trying, the pilot got frustrated and tried to climb onto the accommodation ladder. He failed and fell between the ship and the pier and was seriously injured.

Local emergency response units were called to rescue the pilot from the water as he was unable to climb out because of his injuries. However, his inflatable lifejacket worked as designed and kept him afloat until help arrived.



Actual Damage

The pilot broke three ribs, injured his back, and had numerous deep bruises. He was unable to work for over three months. The ship was also delayed 48 hours while local authorities investigated the incident.



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Potential Damage

The pilot was very fortunate not to have hit his head when he fell. He was also fortunate that he did not get crushed between the hull and the fender system. This could have been a fatal accident.

Prevention

- ★ Is the accommodation ladder fully in place and are the railings, the safety net, and all other components properly secured until everyone has boarded or departed the vessel?
- ★ How is the pilot's arrival communicated to the officer on watch so the accommodation ladder can then be stowed?
- ★ In the rush to get underway, are safety measures ever skipped, ignored, or modified?
- ★ Have you ever seen someone take an unnecessary risk because of frustration or lack of patience?

When you identify a hazard before something goes wrong...

it's a Good Catch.

When you stop an operation before something bad happens...

it's a Good Catch.

When you verify that everyone has boarded or departed the vessel before starting to stow the accommodation ladder...

that's a Good Catch, too!



The American Club would like to specially thank [Independent Maritime Consulting, LLC](#) for their contribution to this document.



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