

MEMBER ALERT



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JANUARY 22, 2026

GOOD CATCH UPDATE: *UNPLUGGED AND UNSAFE – SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS*

Effective deck maintenance and heightened awareness - especially around hydraulic equipment - can prevent accidents that could lead to serious injuries, costly medical claims, operational disruption, exposure to harmful substances and environmental damage liabilities. Make a Good Catch by ensuring that coaming, drain plugs, and containment systems are properly maintained to help limit leaks and protect crew members working on deck.

In this context, the Managers are pleased to present the latest instalment of the Club's *Good Catch* initiative:

- [Unplugged and Unsafe - Slips Trips and Falls](#) available in English, [new](#) and [traditional](#) Mandarin.



GOOD CATCH from The American Club
Unplugged and Unsafe
SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS

Description A crew member seriously injured his knee when he slipped on some oil on an exterior deck. He had to be medically evacuated from the vessel by helicopter and taken to a hospital.

The investigation determined that the drain plug in the containment around a hydraulic winch was not in place. Additionally, the drain hole was so heavily corroded that a plug would not fit securely even if it were there.

A quantity of hydraulic oil had leaked from a hydraulic hose connection on a winch. The oil floated on the water from the drain hole and had been there for a full day. The containment would normally have limited the spread of the oil, but with the drain hole wide open, the oil had been able to contaminate and further pollute the deck.

The crew member was walking in the area to check on some lighting when he slipped on the "oiled" deck and was injured. He was able to use his mobile phone to call for medical help. The responding crew members had to be very careful when they approached the injured crew member as the entire deck all around him was very slippery from the oil. They used a combination of sorbent pads and oil-absorbing sand granules to make the area safe for them to assist the injured crew member.

Actual Damage The injured crew member was unable to return the vessel and had to be repatriated home just one month into his eight-month assignment. The medical care involved surgery and several days in the hospital before the mariner could be flown home. The total cost of the claim exceeded \$230,000. That included the cost of the medical care, travel arrangements to fly him home; an injury pay allowance for the injured mariner for several months while he was unable to work; and travel costs to fly his replacement to the vessel.

Potential Damage The injury could have been worse. Head or face trauma, in addition to the knee injury, would have complicated the incident and medical treatment.

The company was fortunate that the injury happened while the vessel was near a port with a large, capable hospital that could provide full treatment. Had the hospital been small or the injured crew member had to travel to a distant port, the cost of medical care could have been significantly higher. The cost of air ambulance to the nearest large city for appropriate medical care. The air ambulance could have cost an additional \$120,000.

The mariner was fortunate to fully recover before his injury pay allowance ended. He potentially would have had no income if he needed more time to rehabilitate from the injury beyond the time period of his contractually stipulated sick leave allowance.

The company was also fortunate that none of the hydraulic oil went overboard. Although just a small quantity, any oil that gets in the water must be cleaned up. Thus, there would likely have also been an environmental spill claim, too.

What went wrong?

- * The drain plug for the coaming was missing.
- * The deck coaming around the hydraulic winch was not maintained appropriately. Even if the drain plug had been in place, the drain hole was so corroded that it would not have sealed properly.

What went right?

- * The injured crew member had with him the means to communicate with the bridge.
- * The crew's response to the injury was fast and professional.
- * The responding crew recognized the slippery deck conditions and quickly mitigated the risk of another injury and an oil spill.
- * The injured crew member was quickly transferred ashore for appropriate medical treatment.

When you identify a hazard before something goes wrong...
When you stop an operation before something bad happens...
When coaming around hydraulic equipment and drain plugs are properly maintained...

it's a Good Catch.
it's a Good Catch.
that's a Good Catch, too!

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As a reminder, all *Good Catch* alerts and animations are posted at the Club's website at:

https://www.american-club.com/page/good_catch

It is recommended that Members take note of this information and be guided accordingly.