

WSHAlert

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Accident Notification: Worker fell off pilot ladder into sea

On 16 February 2021, a worker was disembarking a vessel to board a passenger launch via a pilot ladder. While descending the pilot ladder, the worker fell into the sea. The worker was rescued and conveyed to the hospital where he was subsequently pronounced dead.

The Ministry of Manpower has commenced investigations into the accident.

The industry is reminded to conduct a comprehensive Risk Assessment for all work activities related to vessel embarkation and disembarkation. Precautions must be taken to prevent workers from falling into water. Where possible, always select a safer method (e.g. use of vessel gangways) for embarkation or disembarkation. If pilot ladders must be used, ensure workers are physically fit for the task and sufficiently confident before allowing them to proceed. Safe Work Procedures must be established to guide workers on the safe use of pilot ladders. Employers of workers exposed to the risk of falling into water must provide suitable life vest to keep the workers afloat in the event they fall into the water. Workers should be trained on the importance and correct manner of donning the life vest. Instruct workers not to attempt embarking or disembarking a vessel when conditions are not favourable (e.g. heavy rain, strong winds and/or choppy waters). If conditions are good, then embarking/disembarking may proceed only when the passenger launch is in position.

* Information on the accident is based on preliminary investigations by the Ministry of Manpower as at 17 Feb 2021. This may be subject to change as investigations are still on-going. Please also note that the recommendations provided here are not exhaustive and they are meant to enhance workplace safety and health so that a recurrence may be prevented. The information and recommendations provided are not to be construed as implying liability on any party nor should it be taken to encapsulate all the responsibilities and obligations under the law.

Accident Notification: Worker pinned by toppled forklift

On 20 February 2021, a worker was operating a forklift at a work site when he reversed it into a pit. The forklift toppled and pinned him. The worker was subsequently rescued and conveyed to the hospital where he succumbed to his injuries.

The Ministry of Manpower has commenced investigations into the accident.

Risk control measures that are applicable when using machines such as forklifts include:

- Deploy only authorised and trained workers for the machine operations;
- Employers are advised to establish strict key controls (e.g. via a mechanical or electronic key management system) to prevent unauthorised operation. The keys should not be left unattended within the machines;
- Forklift operators should secure their seat belt once seated in the forklift;
- For operations near excavated sites, erect suitable barriers and place warning signs

- to alert workers of the dangers in the vicinity;
- Conduct checks to ensure that the above measures are implemented on the ground; and
- Established disciplinary actions for non-compliance.

* Information on the accident is based on preliminary investigations by the Ministry of Manpower as at 23 Feb 2021. This may be subject to change as investigations are still on-going. Please also note that the recommendations provided here are not exhaustive and they are meant to enhance workplace safety and health so that a recurrence may be prevented. The information and recommendations provided are not to be construed as implying liability on any party nor should it be taken to encapsulate all the responsibilities and obligations under the law.

Accident Notification: Workplace explosion kills workers

On 24 February 2021, a group of workers was working on an industrial mixer when an explosion involving combustible dust occurred, injuring multiple workers. All injured workers were conveyed to the hospital where three of them subsequently succumbed to their injuries.

The Ministry of Manpower has commenced investigations into the accident.

Relevant stakeholders must consider and implement applicable risk control measures, including:

- Identifying hazards in relation to combustible dusts and powders used in the workplace;
- Ensuring that industrial equipment and its components are regularly inspected and maintained according to manufacturer's recommendations;
- Ensuring adequately designed Local Exhaust Ventilation (LEV) system is installed on equipment for effective dust capture during operations;
- Implementing ignition controls e.g. suitable flame proof equipment, non-sparking tools, no smoking, hot work permit system, and measures to prevent static build-up;
- Implementing an effective housekeeping programme to prevent dust accumulation at work areas;
- Separating work areas handling combustible dusts from other parts of the workplace where possible; and
- Training of workers on dust hazards, safe handling procedures, personal protection requirements and emergency procedures.

* Information on the accident is based on preliminary investigations by the Ministry of Manpower as at 25 Feb 2021. This may be subject to change as investigations are still on-going. Please also note that the recommendations provided here are not exhaustive and they are meant to enhance workplace safety and health so that a recurrence may be prevented. The information and recommendations provided are not to be construed as implying liability on any party nor should it be taken to encapsulate all the responsibilities and obligations under the law.

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