

Injury after fall from vertical ladder

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Two crew members were performing routine engine room fire watch and thruster space rounds checking oil pressure and temperature checks, when one of them was injured falling off a vertical ladder.

What happened?

The incident happened when they were climbing up the 3m high ladder; one of them was holding a fire patrol device in one hand. That crew member lost grip on the handrail at the top of the ladder, fell and hit their head on the edge of a steel bund on the deck, sustaining a minor cut to the right eyebrow. #



What went wrong?

- The crew member was climbing the ladder whilst trying to carry something in their hand.

- The ladder did not extend far enough to the next level up to provide safe access.
- There was no anti-slip grit applied on the rungs of ladder.

What lessons can be learned?

- The design of the vertical ladder and its location/position made it easy for the crew member to be unsafe
 - It was an inadequate and unsuitable design.
 - A ladder extension could have been provided.
 - Anti-slip paint could have been used on the rungs.
- Some form of bag or carrying device could have been provided for the “fire patrolling device”.
- The task was seen “routine” and there was an unchallenged acceptance of the method of carrying it out
 - Trying to climb a ladder whilst carrying something in their hand.
There was little awareness of the potential risks involved in this task.
- Opportunities to stop and consider the risks of the job – discussing a JSA, holding a toolbox talk before starting work – could have been taken.

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