



Learning Event



OPERATING A VESSEL

HAZARD

Physical
(Person at height)

**Person Fall
From Height**

CONSEQUENCES

Actual: Permanent Impairment

Potential: This could have caused a fatality

WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO ENSURE SAFE ACCESS BETWEEN SHORE AND VESSELS TO PREVENT SOMEONE FALLING FROM HEIGHT?

What Happened?

A vessel had just made fast at its berth and was being prepared for operational service. The Deck Rating was in the process of positioning the shore gangway to locate it on the mezzanine deck of the vessel. After climbing the access ladder from the main deck to the mezzanine deck, the Deck Rating removed the gangway remote control from their pocket and walked toward the handrail opening. As they approached the edge of the deck to position the gangway, they tripped on a metal airline and stumbled forward through the opening, falling approximately 2.9 metres onto the main deck below. The Deck Rating sustained serious, life-altering injuries.

Why did it Happen?

- Operational Oversight: Upon arrival at the Berth, the vessel's access setup was incompatible with the gangway, yet no formal change management or risk assessment was conducted.
- Unaddressed Hazards: Modifications led to unsafe conditions - such as an unprotected handrail opening and exposed fixed airlines - which remained uncorrected.
- Compounding Failures: These latent hazards, alongside the distraction of faulty gangway hydraulics, ultimately contributed to a fall incident.



What did they Learn?

- Nationwide review of vessel access arrangements carried out - mandatory Safe Access Assessment at receiving new port locations prior to relocating vessels.
- Frontline leader advanced training in Management of Change and risk assessment conducted.
- Safe Access Survey of all gangways/vessels in the Australian fleet carried out.
- Project undertaken to design and build a prototype mobile trailer-based gangway. The new design prioritises safety and is engineered for ease of use, road transportability, and adaptability. It features slew, luff, and telescopic functions to accommodate varying tidal conditions.



General arrangement of the portable gangway

IOGP Life-Saving Rules

- ✓ Confirm that hazards are controlled and it is safe to start



Ask yourself or your Crew:

- Are gangways that you use designed and built to relevant Standards?
- Do shore-based gangways land on the main deck where possible to eliminate fall from height hazards?
- Do gangways have regular structural and hydraulic assessments? Are these assessments undertaken as part of your planned maintenance program?
- Are Frontline Leaders confident they know when and how to manage change and complete formal risk assessments?
- Is safe vessel access integrated as a critical risk within your company's safety management system, and included in vessel relocation planning prior to vessels being moved?

Further information:



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Safer Together:
Engineering Solutions
Portal



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Safer Together:
Assist and Assure
(Step 7 Process)



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