

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DISABLING WORK INJURIES

1. An assistant cook returning to the ship at 0630 slipped or caught his heel on the upper landing platform of the gangway as he stepped down to the main deck bruising his left shin and twisting his right wrist.

COMMENT: A night on the town has a deleterious effect on a seafarer's well being.

2. An able seaman was removing lashings from a 5-ton cargo hook and swivel that had been painted and suspended to the midship guy to dry. The assembly slipped and fell to the hatch top and struck the employee's left foot severely bruising his left great toe.

COMMENT: Always get assistance when working with heavy objects. The clarity of hindsight is far greater than that of foresight.

3. An able seaman maintenance climbed on a steel hinged hatch cover to disengage a pallet sling which had fouled on a shackle attached to the hoisting pad. The hatch cover raised about one foot on one side before the bridle slipped off dropping the pontoon. The sudden dropping of the pontoon threw the employee off balance causing him to fall backward and suffer a back strain. The boatswain was operating the winch.

COMMENT: Working around cargo gear presents many unusual hazards and demands constant alertness by seamen. Wise men learn from their mistakes and the mistakes of others.

4. An oiler sleeping in a top bunk was called for his 0400-0800 watch. He claims he thought he was in the motel where he had been previously staying. Somewhat startled and disoriented he jumped out of the top bunk and fractured his right leg.

COMMENT: It is incumbent upon personnel calling their reliefs to guard against startling a person while he is asleep. Although no bunk ladder was being used, a ladder would hardly have prevented the accident. The use of lee rails or bunk guards may have prevented this accident.

5. A newly hired wiper, while asleep, dreamed he was playing football. He claims he was thrown a pass that he reached out to get and fell out of bed striking his head on a nearby bench. He sustained a laceration on his forehead.

COMMENT: The use of lee rails or bunk guards may have prevented this accident. Personnel who have nightmares or thrash about in their sleep should notify their department heads as it may be possible to assign such personnel to lower bunks or erect a suitable barrier.

6. An assistant cook was closing a weather tight door. In doing so, his right index finger was amputated. A very brief report was submitted. The cause of the accident was not shown.

COMMENT: Always be mindful of keeping hands as well as other parts of the body out of pinch-points.

ENCLOSURE

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DISABLING WORK INJURIES continued

7. A newly hired wiper going down an inclined ladder with a bucket of water twisted his right ankle when he stepped from the ladder to the deck and sustained a torn ligament and a bone chip of the ankle.

COMMENT: Young inexperienced employees often overestimate their ability to cope with new surroundings, particularly aboard ship. They need careful supervision by old timers.

8. An assistant steward storekeeper was working in a storeroom shifting supplies. He slipped in a substance that had leaked from one or more cans causing a severe contusion of his left knee cap.

COMMENT: Remove leaky containers before the spoiled contents wind up in the soup and cause such unfortunate mishaps as this one.

9. A messman was carrying two containers of ice cream up an inclined ladder. He claimed he slipped and struck his left shin on a ladder step causing an abrasion. The accident was not reported until four days later.

COMMENT: Always report accidents promptly and obtain medical attention immediately. Two such containers cannot be carried safely with one hand and obstructs vision. Watch where you are going and use handrails.

10. An able seaman was climbing into an upper bunk, twisted his back and suffered a para vertebral muscle spasm.

COMMENT: Where possible older men should be assigned lower bunks.

11. An able seaman was chipping paint while in a boatswain's chair. He decided to change position and kneeled in the chair after unfastening his safety belt. He slipped to the deck about 8 feet below and fractured his left elbow.

COMMENT: Using an unfastened life belt is like using no belt at all when aloft.