



## SIMPLIFIED SAFETY INVESTIGATION REPORT

201610/022

REPORT NO.: 20/2017

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The Merchant Shipping (Accident and Incident Safety Investigation) Regulations, 2011 prescribe that the sole objective of marine safety investigations carried out in accordance with the regulations, including analysis, conclusions, and recommendations, which either result from them or are part of the process thereof, shall be the prevention of future marine accidents and incidents through the ascertainment of causes, contributing factors and circumstances.

Moreover, it is not the purpose of marine safety investigations carried out in accordance with these regulations to apportion blame or determine civil and criminal liabilities.

### NOTE

This report is not written with litigation in mind and pursuant to Regulation 13(7) of the Merchant Shipping (Accident and Incident Safety Investigation) Regulations, 2011, shall be inadmissible in any judicial proceedings whose purpose or one of whose purposes is to attribute or apportion liability or blame, unless, under prescribed conditions, a Court determines otherwise.

The report may therefore be misleading if used for purposes other than the promulgation of safety lessons.

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### MV GARIP BABA Serious injury while working aloft in the Ionian Sea 15 October 2016

#### Course of events

*Garip Baba* was enroute to Rotterdam, The Netherlands from Hopa, Turkey with 5,500 metric tonnes of corn in bulk. The ship's course was 272°. The wind was East Southeasterly Force 5 and with a wave height of about 1.5 m. The vessel was navigating smoothly and there was only very gentle rolling.

While underway, the crew members took the opportunity to carry out planned routine maintenance tasks, which they would otherwise have limited time to carry out in port, if any.

The freefall lifeboat launching system required monthly greasing in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. It was hence decided to task the bosun to carry out the necessary greasing. One AB was to accompany him throughout the duration of the job.

A risk assessment dated 30 September 2013 (working aloft)

was referred to before the task was initiated and the 'Work Aloft' checklist was completed together with the chief mate.

In addition to his traditional safety gear, the bosun had a safety helmet and a safety harness (Figure 1). He was also carrying the grease gun which, however, was secured to his belt by means of a rope to facilitate movement with free hands.



Figure 1: Safety harness similar to the one used by the bosun

The bosun was very experienced and found no problem to climb the freefall lifeboat davits and work around it. The safety harness hook was attached to the lifeboat railing (Figure 2).



**Figure 2: Blue arrow shows where the safety harness was attached to the lifeboat's railing**

At one point in time, the bosun moved to relocate himself to a different position on the davits. During this process, he lost his balance and fell down from the davits to the poop deck, in close proximity of the mooring winches (Figure 3).



**Figure 3: The drop from the davits to the poop deck was about 4.0 m**

### **Reported injuries**

Considering the height of the fall, the bosun was disembarked and transferred to a hospital in Italy for further medical assistance and necessary treatment. The bosun was diagnosed with back injuries and had to undergo a surgical intervention before he was actually repatriated.

### **Cause of the fall<sup>1</sup>**

The bosun recalled that he was trying to relocate himself on the davits and therefore had to unhook the safety harness from the lifeboat's railings. It was during this particular moment that he lost his balance and consequently fell to the poop deck.

### **Design of the safety harness**

The safety harness was a conventional one and inspections carried out soon after the accident revealed no problems or defects in the material. The harness, however, had one major design flaw. Given that there was one hook, it required the user to unhook it from the securing point before any significant movements could be made.

This was ironic, given that the probability of losing one's balance was precisely during the relocation and hence, when the safety harness was unsecured. This latent issue was not detected during the risk assessment process. Although the risk of fall whilst climbing up and down and during the work *per se* was mentioned in the risk assessment, this was only addressed by referring to the 'Work Aloft' Checklist. The Checklist, however, made no reference to the disconnection of the safety harness' hook and hence the risk remained unaddressed.

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<sup>1</sup> The purpose of a marine safety investigation is to determine the circumstances and safety factors of the accident as a basis for making recommendations, and to prevent further marine casualties and incidents from occurring in the future.

## **SAFETY ACTIONS TAKEN DURING THE COURSE OF THE SAFETY INVESTIGATION<sup>2</sup>**

During the course of the safety investigation, the Company has revisited its 'Work Aloft' procedures. Work aloft has now been limited when the vessel is at sea in order to avoid potential situations in cases of unexpected ship movements.

Moreover, the Company has provided its vessels with safety harnesses that are fitted with two hooks (Figure 4).



**Figure 4: Safety harness designed with two hooks**

This design will ensure that at any point in time, one hook is always attached to a secure point, even during necessary repositioning of the crew member.

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<sup>2</sup> **Safety actions should not create a presumption of blame and / or liability.**

**SHIP PARTICULARS**

|                         |                              |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| Vessel Name:            | <i>Garip Baba</i>            |
| Flag:                   | Malta                        |
| Classification Society: | Bureau Veritas               |
| IMO Number:             | 9564970                      |
| Type:                   | General cargo                |
| Registered Owner:       | Garip Maritime Ltd.          |
| Managers:               | Yilmar Lojistik Gemi, Turkey |
| Construction:           | Steel                        |
| Length Overall:         | 120.0 m                      |
| Registered Length:      | 114.37 m                     |
| Gross Tonnage:          | 5857                         |
| Minimum Safe Manning:   | 12                           |
| Authorised Cargo:       | Solid bulk                   |

**VOYAGE PARTICULARS**

|                    |                            |
|--------------------|----------------------------|
| Port of Departure: | Hopa, Turkey               |
| Port of Arrival:   | Rotterdam, The Netherlands |
| Type of Voyage:    | International              |
| Cargo Information: | 5,500 mt of corn in bulk   |
| Manning:           | 15                         |

**MARINE OCCURRENCE INFORMATION**

|                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Date and Time:                   | 15 October 2016 at 0920  |
| Classification of Occurrence:    | Serious Marine Casualty  |
| Location of Occurrence:          | 36° 26.4' N 019° 25.4' E   |
| Place on Board                   | Boat deck  |
| Injuries / Fatalities:           | One serious injury   |
| Damage / Environmental Impact:   | None   |
| Ship Operation:                  | In passage   |
| Voyage Segment:                  | Transit  |
| External & Internal Environment: | The wind was East Southeast Force 5 and a wave height of about 1.5 m. Air temperature was 24 °C and the sea temperature was recorded at 28.5 °C. |
| Persons on board:                | 15   |