



FINDINGS OF CONCERN

Sector Ohio Valley

August 24, 2022
Louisville, KY

Findings of Concern 012-22

IMPORTANCE OF FOLLOWING SAFE-WORKPLACE POLICIES

Purpose. The U.S. Coast Guard issues findings of concern to disseminate information related to unsafe conditions that are identified as causal factors in a casualty and could contribute to future incidents. Findings of concern are intended to educate the public, state, or local agencies about the conditions discovered so they may address the findings with an appropriate voluntary action or highlight existing applicable company policies or state/local regulations.

The Incident. A crewmember working onboard a passenger vessel moored alongside the pier on the Ohio River went missing. During the initial investigation, the crewmember was last seen on security video footage falling into the Ohio River while attempting to cross from the passenger vessel to the passenger receiving facility.

The crewmember was observed on video removing the top portion of a starboard safety railing. Following removal, the crewmember stepped over the remaining railing and attempted to cross the approximate five-foot gap over the water using a facility fender as a step. Security camera footage shows the crewmember attempting to cross the gap when the crewmember drops out of view and does not reappear. Local, State and Federal search and rescue assets were notified and conducted multiple, unsuccessful searches until the body was discovered several days later.

Contributing Factors and Analysis. One of the causal factors identified was the fact the crewmember failed to don a personal floatation device prior to transiting outside of the vessels safety railing as required by company policy. Previously, the crewmember was observed and reminded by a supervisor about boarding and exiting vessels outside the safety railing without wearing a work-vest type personal floatation device.

Findings of Concern. Coast Guard Investigators have identified the following measures implemented by owner(s) / operator(s) of similar vessels in similar service to mitigate the risks associated with the above-identified contributing factors:

- Safe work practice company policies should be positively enforced with crewmembers
- Provide crewmembers with explanations as to why the company has personal floatation devices (PFD) and articulate their availability as well as the rationale for donning PFDs per company policy.

Closing. These findings of concern are provided for informational purposes only and do not relieve any domestic or international safety, operational, or material requirements. For any questions or comments please contact Sector Ohio Valley, Investigations Division by phone at (502) 779-5339 or by email at STL-SMB-SectorOhioValley-Louisville2692@uscg.mil