



## ***FINDINGS OF CONCERN***

### **Sector Delaware Bay**

October 28, 2022  
Philadelphia, PA

Findings of Concern 016-22

## **UNSAFE DECK CONDITIONS IN CARGO HOLDS CAN CAUSE INJURIES!**

Purpose. The U.S. Coast Guard issues findings of concern to disseminate information related to unsafe conditions that were 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 longshoreman was injured while conducting cargo operations inside the cargo hold of a deep draft bulk carrier when the forklift he was driving tipped over. This failure was due to the collapse of the wooden decking on which the forklift was traveling. At the time of the injury, the vessel was moored. USCG investigators discovered that the vessel crew would routinely install wooden decks in the cargo hold to perform cargo operations and that the terminal would provide steel plating in places where the vessel's wooden decks were damaged and deemed insufficient to withstand the weight of a forklift.

Contributing Factors and Analysis. The investigation identified the following causal factors: 1) Vessel's failure to repair broken wooden decks in cargo holds; 2) Vessel's and terminal's use of poor cargo deck procedures; 3) Vessel's and terminal's failure to efficiently secure the cargo hold deck; 4) Vessel's and terminal's failure to have a written procedure regarding crew safety for cargo ops.

Findings of Concern. Coast Guard investigators have identified the following measures implemented by owners/operators of similar vessels that help mitigate the risks associated with the above identified contributing factors:

- Establish a written procedure between the terminals and vessels for cargo hold operational safety.
- Establish procedures, standards, and requirements within a vessel's Safety Management System to ensure wooden decks used inside cargo holds are of sound repair and condition prior to cargo operations.

Closing. These findings of concern are provided for informational purpose only and do not relieve any domestic or international safety, operational, or material requirements. For any questions or comments please contact Sector Delaware Bay Investigations Division by phone at (215) 271-4853 or email at [PhillyIO@uscg.mil](mailto:PhillyIO@uscg.mil).