

Fall from bosun chair

It was morning and the bosun and three other ABs had planned to do some maintenance work in cargo hold 1.

The bosun began to scrape the parts he could reach from the tank top and also used an extension.

After the 1000 coffee break the team returned to the cargo hold. As prior to the break the bosun had finished what he could from the tank top, he rigged up a ladder to reach further up. He was working in the aft starboard corner scraping and replacing the Ram-Nek sealant tape used to seal the space between the guide on the vessel's side and the movable bulkhead. The other ABs were working on the other corners.

The bosun started to climb up a ladder, and the other ABs had their back to him. He was carrying a bosun chair, a roll of sealant and a hand scraper in his pocket. His plan was to scrape downward and apply the sealant.

The deck gang heard a thud and when they turned around they could see the bosun lying on the tank-top on his back, the bosun chair and safety harness were lying by his legs. The hook on the bosun chair had broken and the bosun had fallen. He had not secured his safety harness.

One of the ABs climbed out of the hold and raised the alarm. The Master sounded the emergency alarm and mustered the emergency team by the hold.

The crew managed to secure the bosun on a stretcher and take him to the vessel's hospital. The bosun was bleeding from his head, ears and nose and had fractured his legs and right wrist. He was conscious and in great pain.

The vessel made contact with the MRCC and a helicopter was dispatched to the vessel. At this time the vessel was about 200 miles from land and it took the helicopter about four hours to arrive.





Questions

When discussing this case please consider that the actions taken at the time made sense for all involved. Do not only judge but also ask why you think these actions were taken and could this happen on your vessel?

1. What were the immediate causes of this accident?
2. How could this accident have been prevented?
3. What sections of our SMS would have been breached, if any?
4. Is our SMS sufficient to prevent this kind of accident?
5. If procedures were breached, why do you think this was the case?
6. Is there a risk that this kind of accident could happen on our vessel?
7. How often do we check PPE?
8. If we see someone not using the PPE correctly, what are we supposed to do?
9. How could this accident have been prevented?
10. Do we have a risk assessment on board that addresses these risks?
11. Is there any kind of training that we should do that addresses these issues?
12. What can we learn?