

KISH P & I LOSS PREVENTION CIRCULAR KPI-LP-150-2014 **(Incinerator Door Caused Injury; Lessons to be Learnt)**

► **The incident:**

An engineer attempted to open the incinerator door while underway. His thumb was trapped and crushed between the door holder lever and the stopper plate (see photo). He was quickly transferred to the ship's hospital and first aid was administered. The victim was disembarked and at the hospital a fracture of the thumb was diagnosed and orthopedic surgery was necessary.



There were no reported difficulties in opening the door, and it is not known why the engineer placed his left hand at the indicated location. The engineer had two prior contracts with the same ship so he was familiar with this incinerator unit. However, the day before the incident there had been an unexpected engine room Unmanned Machinery Space (UMS) suspension. Due to this UMS suspension he had to stand watches in the engine room and as a consequence had inadequate rest for the period leading up to the accident.



► **Direct causes:**

1. Inappropriate handling of the equipment.
2. Improper decision-making and lack of judgment.
3. Fatigue due to violation of resting hours the previous day without adequate compensatory rest.

Also, it appears the risks involved were not taken into consideration. Since the duties of operating the incinerator were considered 'routine', no risk assessment had been done on the task. Therefore, the company also found the following:

► **Contributing factors:**

1. Inappropriate management of engine staff.
2. Inadequate training and familiarization.
3. Lack of a risk assessment on the use and handling of the incinerator.

Additional note: The Company is to be congratulated for such a thorough report. It should be noted that the first two direct causes are in fact probably due to the third factor – fatigue. Fatigue has been said to be the equivalent of working while under the influence of alcohol, as both judgment and reaction time are impaired. In this case, the unexpected UMS suspension meant more work and less rest for the engineer. When unplanned extra work is incurred, mariners are encouraged to make every attempt to recuperate their needed rest hours to avoid unexpected neagative consequences.

Some of the factors within human element which can potentially cause fatigue are as follows:

- Mental and emotional factors such as fear, monotony and boredom, which are characteristics of seafaring in general;***
- Physical conditions such as diet (fat, fried food, sugar content food) and illness as common problem aboard ship due to harsh environment;***
- Ingested chemicals such as alcohol, drugs and caffeine used very often among seafarers to overcome sleep and boredom;***
- Workload aboard ship and in ports;***
- Age of seafarer;***
- The “Can do” attitude of seafarers, a sensitive problem traditionally due to the nature of seafaring which promotes a culture of self reliance;***
- The increased volume of workload at ports today.***