



KISH P & I LOSS PREVENTION CIRCULAR KPI-LP-163-2014 **(Use of Mobile Phones & Risks involved)**

Although there are strict rules in many jurisdictions against using a mobile phone while driving, the same is not enforced in the Maritime sector. According to experience-shown cases in port operations; there have been many dangerous near misses due to usage of mobile phones by crane/forklift /pay loader operators and stevedores working in the hold and by ship's crew while standing on the hatch coamings.

It is proposed that a safety campaign against mobile phone usage by working operators must be taken up by all ports. Vessels should also insist that stevedores do not talk on mobile phones while handling cranes or other equipment.

On the aspect of the navigation concern; Safety Advisories have been published by administrations regarding the use of mobile phones, smart phones and handheld text and email messaging devices. As a result of National Transportation Safety Board investigations into two collisions; the investigators found that mobile phones used to place calls or send text messages while underway were factors in both incidents.

This Safety Advisory reiterates much of the advice issued by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency in Marine Guidance Note (MGN) 299 'Interference with Safe Navigation through Inappropriate use of Mobile Phones' which highlights the risk of

mobile phones distracting those tasked with the safe navigation of the vessel. Although published over 5 years ago, the advice is particularly relevant today; now that it is common for seafarers to bring mobile phones with them when they join a ship.

Being able to keep in contact with family and friends while off duty is a welcome development, as is the ability to call the office easily when within range of a signal. However, there have been a number of navigational incidents, mostly groundings, which have occurred due to bridge team members becoming distracted while using mobile phones in a similar manner to accidents caused by motorists using mobile phones while driving.

Members who may not have done so already are encouraged to modify their Safety Management Systems to include procedures prohibiting the use of mobile phones and hand held messaging devices in circumstances where the full attention of bridge watch-keeping personnel is required.

For example:

- ✓ In pilotage waters or when entering or departing port;
- ✓ When navigating in the vicinity of ports or anchorages;
- ✓ In restricted visibility;
- ✓ In areas of high traffic density;
- ✓ In areas of restricted sea room;
- ✓ When only one navigating officer is on watch.