

Safety Alert

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Subject: Lost Time Incident – Loss of Awareness

What Happened / Narrative

After completing his workday, the IP was at the Changing Room, which is located next to the Engine Room access door. The IP was standing in the gap between the lockers and the door which opens in towards his position (as recreated in the image below).

For balancing his body and looking down inadvertently he placed his right hand with the middle finger overlapping the door frame and the door. At almost the same time, the 3rd Engineer opened the engine room door and let it go. The door at the time, closed at fast closing rate (about 2 seconds) catching the middle finger of the IP, causing him a severe injury.

Why Did it Happen / Cause

- Loss of situational awareness while positioned next to the door.
- Ship design with changing room lockers fitted in a potentially unsafe area and not identified or highlighted as such.
- Fire door's self-closing device speed not adjusted correctly.
- The vessels planned maintenance standard job did not define closing-speed adjustment, allowing the condition to persist.
- Crew tend to normalize permanent hazards due to familiarity.

Lessons Learned

- Doors are permanent hazards due to their weight, closing force, and direction of travel, and must be treated as active risks at all times.
- Fire door self-closing devices must be correctly adjusted and maintained, with a controlled closing speed of 5–10 seconds to allow safe reaction time.
- Vessel design can create permanent pinch-point hazards where doors are fitted near fixed structures, which must be identified, assessed, and clearly marked to reduce exposure.
- Familiarity with unsafe conditions must not replace hazard awareness or reporting, especially for door systems.

Photographs / Supporting Information



Ask Yourself and Your Crew:

1. Are fire door self-closing devices adjusted to the correct closing speed (5–10 seconds)?
2. Am I aware of where my hands are positioned when near or passing through doors?
3. Am I always handling doors using the handle or knob, not the door frame or edge?

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