

SAFETY SCUTTLEBUTT

FEBRUARY 2025



Inside this Issue:

- Risk Management Good Practices: Galley Housekeeping
- What is Human Metapneumovirus (HPMV) and How Can it be Prevented?
- Wellness Corner: Combatting Loneliness
- Safety Refresher: Ladder Safety
- A Critical Reminder: Small Errors, Big Consequences
- Safety Stars
- INTERTANKO Photo Contest
- Company Updates/ News
- January 2025 Safety Metrics



Your colleagues at USMMI in the Norfolk office are dedicated to ensuring our mariners work aboard the safest ships in the U.S. flag fleet. Our goal is for you to return home to your friends and families as healthy as when you joined our fleet. We aim to foster a safety culture aboard our ships that encourages you to return year after year, building a successful career with us. USMMI's growth and success depend on the strong contributions of our shipboard workforce. Our reputation with customers is built on the outstanding work our mariners perform daily.

Receiving feedback from you, our mariners, is crucial to creating a positive safety culture. In Spring 2024, we conducted our first Crew Survey, which provided valuable insights into areas needing improvement. This led to several initiatives focused on shipboard management, PPE, our Safety Management System, and tour lengths. We followed up with another survey in November 2024. We are now working on new initiatives based on the results to continue enhancing ship safety and maintaining a positive culture aboard our ships. Look out for updates on these initiatives. Both surveys have shown that most of our mariners feel safe and enjoy the work environment aboard our ships. We will strive to maintain this trend.

Thank you for your contributions to USMMI's continued success. Smooth sailing and stay safe!



VP, DAVID SLOANE

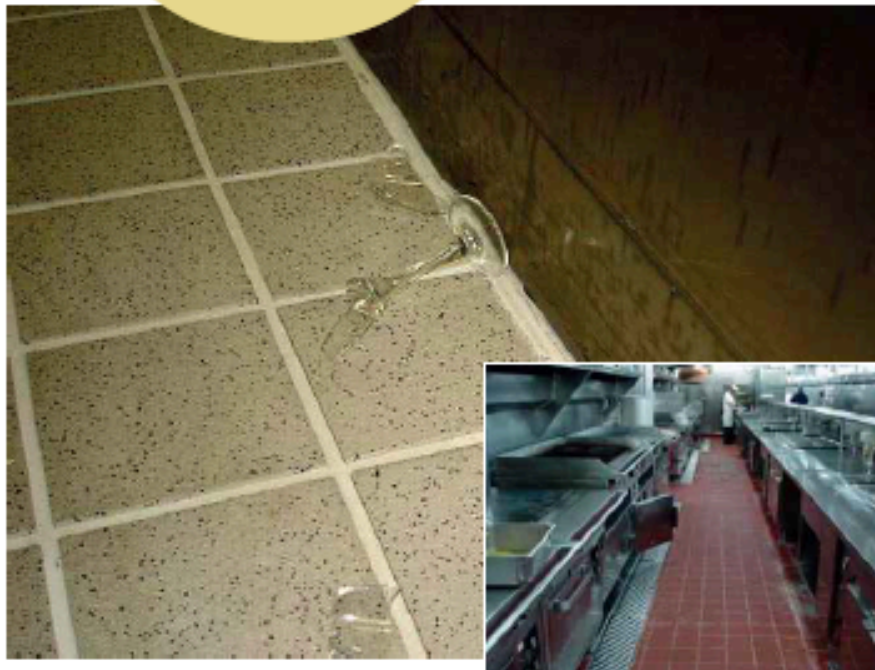


Risk Management Good Practice: Galley Housekeeping

GOOD PRACTICE

- ✓ Clear, clean galley decks
- ✓ Safe working practices in use
- ✓ Less risk of an accident

The nature of galley work means a slip/trip and fall in this area is highly likely to result in serious injury.

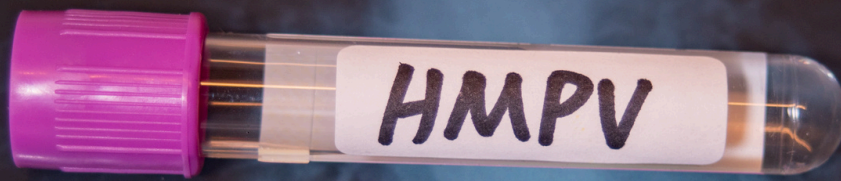


BAD PRACTICE

- ✗ Broken glass left on galley decks
- ✗ Cupboard doors not secured
- ✗ Risk of an accident



**It's your ship and equipment
– look after them and they will look after you**



What You Need to Know About Human Metapneumovirus (HPMV)

Recently, there has been some news about Human Metapneumovirus (HPMV), and you may be wondering what it is and how it can be prevented. HPMV is a common virus that has been circulating globally since it was first identified in 2001.

What is HPMV?

HPMV is a virus that causes cold-like symptoms, such as a runny nose, cough, and congestion. In most cases, it causes mild illness, similar to the common cold, and many people may have had it without even knowing. However, in some cases, it can lead to more severe symptoms like shortness of breath and wheezing, which may require hospitalization. Those most at risk include the very young, the elderly, those with weakened immune systems, and those with chronic lung conditions.

Is HPMV a Concern?

There have been reports of a rise in cases of HPMV, particularly in China, but this does not appear to be a new or more dangerous strain. Tests for HPMV are available, and the virus is part of the CDC's routine respiratory virus surveillance. Over the last year, HPMV has had relatively low test positivity rates compared to other viruses, like flu, COVID-19, and RSV.

HPMV spreads through direct contact with respiratory droplets from coughing or sneezing, or by touching contaminated surfaces like doorknobs and keyboards. It is not airborne like COVID-19.

Who is Most at Risk?

For most people, HPMV will cause mild cold symptoms. However, those who are immunocompromised, have chronic lung disease or are very young or elderly may face more serious risks. Some studies have shown that these groups may experience higher mortality.

How Can We Prevent HPMV?

The good news is that the same preventive measures that worked for COVID-19 can help reduce the spread of HPMV:

1. Wash your hands regularly with soap and water.
2. Wear a mask in crowded places, especially when interacting with others in port.
3. Clean common surfaces frequently, such as doorknobs and keyboards.
4. Stay home if you're sick to avoid spreading the virus.
- 5.

For those at higher risk, it's important to report symptoms early and take additional precautions, like extended isolation or wearing a mask to protect yourself and others.

Stay Safe and Stay Informed

While the risk of HPMV is low for most people, it's still important to stay informed and take steps to protect yourself, especially if you're in a higher-risk group. We'll continue to monitor the situation and provide updates as necessary.

Stay safe and healthy!



Written by: Adam Rutenberg, DO, Keith Boniface, MD, Tenagne Haile-Mariam, MD, Neal Sikka, MD, Francis O'Connell, MD, GW Maritime Medical Access, Medical Faculty Associates, George Washington University

COMBATTING LONELINESS

Connection is a basic human need that's crucial for mental and physical well-being. Staying connected can be especially challenging while at sea, far from family and friends. Loneliness and social disconnection have significant health effects, increasing the risk of heart disease, stroke, and mental health issues.

The good news? Even at sea, it's possible to foster meaningful relationships and combat loneliness. Here are some practical ways to maintain connection when you're far from loved ones:

Prioritize Regular Communication

Use the tools you have to stay connected with family and friends. Schedule regular video calls, even if they're short, through apps like WhatsApp, Zoom, or Teams. Sending voice messages or emails can help bridge the gap when calls aren't possible. Consider creating a shared journal through Day One to exchange thoughts and updates.

Create Community Onboard

Your crew can be a vital support system. Take time to connect through shared meals, game nights, or group fitness activities. Even small gestures, like checking in with each other, saying good morning, can make a big difference in creating a sense of camaraderie.

Plan Ahead for Shore Leave

When you know you'll have time off, plan quality moments with loved ones, whether that's a special trip, a simple family dinner, or even just uninterrupted time together. Having something to look forward to can ease feelings of loneliness while at sea.

Seek Support If You're Struggling

Loneliness can be tough to face alone. If you're finding it difficult, consider reaching out to your primary care provider for a referral to behavioral health. A therapist can provide coping skills and techniques to combat feelings of loneliness.

Remember, connection doesn't have to mean constant communication—it's about being intentional with the time and tools you have. Building relationships, both onboard and back home, will help you maintain a healthier, happier life, no matter where your journey takes you.



LADDER SAFETY

Falls involving ladders account for 43% of fatal falls

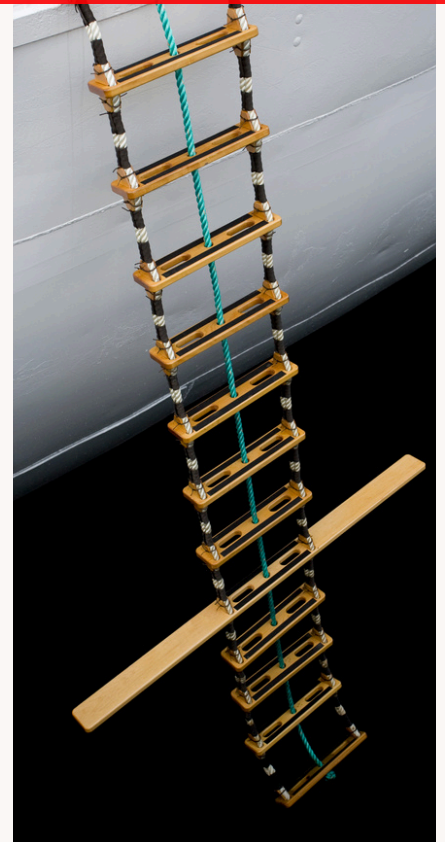


Ladder safety is all about using ladders properly to prevent accidents and injuries. On ships, where conditions can be unstable, it's especially important to follow safety guidelines when climbing or descending ladders. Key points include making sure ladders are secure, in good condition, and used correctly by all crew members. Proper training, regular checks, and staying aware of your surroundings can help avoid dangerous falls and other ladder-related accidents.

Approximately 20% of fall injuries involve ladders

LADDER SAFETY REMINDERS

- Always maintain 3 points of contact with the ladder and always climb a ladder facing forward.
- Do not use the top of the ladder as a step
- Do not overreach. Do not carry an object that can cause you to lose your balance ascending or descending on the ladder
- Do not exceed the weight limit rating for the ladder
- For folding ladders on deck connecting to a bulkhead that's not welded to the deck, obey the 4:1 rule. For every 4' up, the ladder base should be 1' from the wall
- Do not move or extend a ladder when anyone is on it
- Utilize guardrails or similar safety features for ladders longer than 10ft
- Always check for damages or issues with the ladder before use. Check rungs, steps, clips, chains, rings, and/or ropes-Jacobs Ladders
- Pilot Ladders: Visually inspect daily, detailed inspection mandatory monthly, and full replacement necessary every 2 years.



A CRITICAL REMINDER: SMALL ERRORS, BIG CONSEQUENCES

USMMI would like to take a moment to reflect on a sobering event that serves as a powerful reminder of how small errors, compounded by procedural oversights, can lead to devastating outcomes.

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) recently concluded an investigation into a tragic incident that resulted in the loss of two mariners aboard a vessel. . (Click [HERE](#) to view the article) The findings pointed to critical maintenance failures, including the installation of an incorrect valve, the use of incorrect spare parts, and a failure to follow Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) during bunkering. These seemingly minor mistakes, when combined, led to a catastrophic engine room fire that claimed the lives of two crew members.

As the NTSB stated:

"This incident serves as a stark reminder of how seemingly minor maintenance decisions, combined with procedural oversights, can lead to catastrophic consequences in maritime operations."

This tragedy underscores the importance of adhering to safety protocols, following the proper procedures, and ensuring that maintenance tasks are completed using the correct parts and in strict compliance with our Safety Management Systems (SMS).

Every team member has the ability to identify and raise concerns about procedures that could compromise safety. Your input helps create a culture of continuous improvement, preventing incidents like the one described. While it may be easy to overlook minor actions, this event clearly demonstrates that every decision counts.

What Can We Learn?

1. **The Importance of Correct Parts and Equipment:** Always ensure that the correct parts are installed and that they meet the specifications outlined by both the manufacturer and our company policies.
2. **Adherence to Procedures:** Tasks like bunkering, maintenance, and safety checks must be carried out precisely as outlined. Skipping steps or rushing can have serious, long-term consequences.
3. **Safety Management Systems (SMS):** Our SMS is designed to protect everyone on board. By following its guidelines, we can mitigate risks and avoid preventable accidents.
4. **Continuous Vigilance:** Every team member must remain vigilant and thorough in carrying out their duties. Even the smallest oversight can have a significant impact on safety. Never assume that minor issues won't escalate.

Discussion Points

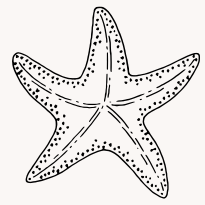
We encourage you to reflect on the following and discuss these points with your crew:

- How can we improve our maintenance procedures to ensure that every part is the right one, every time?
- What steps can we take as a team to ensure full SMS compliance throughout all stages of our operations?
- Can you think of examples where small decisions have had a larger impact on safety in the past?

By discussing and pondering these points, we can work together to improve our procedures and ensure that we all return home safely. Remember, it's not just about compliance—it's about taking ownership of our roles and ensuring safety at every level of operation.



SAFETY STARS



YOSEMITE TRADER
BOSUN,
WILSON TRAYVILLA

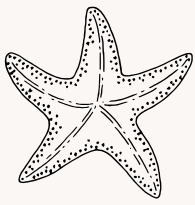


“Bosun Trayvilla devised a way to use the tank rescue gear to safely lift the battery room door to the bridge deck. This action allowed the ob to be done safely and demonstrate the safety gear in action. Wilson also lead the safety initiative on deck, assigning personalized PPE in order to increase usage and longevity. He is a valuable member of the team and a resource for all the deck department” - Chief Mate, Aaron Lamb

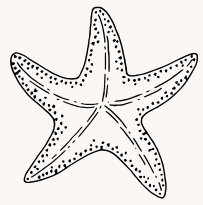
“QMED Hubbard has done an excellent job being a mentor and creating a safety culture with the new Unlicensed Apprentice and Engine Cadet. Troy has taken his shipmates under his wing and constantly is making sure they are wearing their PPE and teaching them the proper ways to use tools and complete standard projects” -Chief Engineer, Ben White

YOSEMITE TRADER
QMED,
TROY HUBBARD





SAFETY STARS



POHANG PIONEER
BOSUN,
MOHAMED (MOE) MOHAMED



“Bosun Moe does a very good job continually on the Pioneer. He adheres to safety and does his best to have all crew members wear the proper PPE.” - Captain Fox



INTERTANKO

PHOTO CONTEST

Exciting Opportunity: INTERTANKO Photo Competition 2025 – Let's Go for the Win!

After scoring second place in last year's INTERTANKO Photo Competition (awesome!), I wanted to reach out and see if we have any candidates for 2025 consideration. Scorpio Tankers took home first and third place last year—impressive, right? Now, it's our turn to go for the win!



If you've captured any stunning shots of life on the water or your experiences in the maritime industry, we want to see them! This is a great opportunity to showcase your talent and represent our team in the global maritime community.

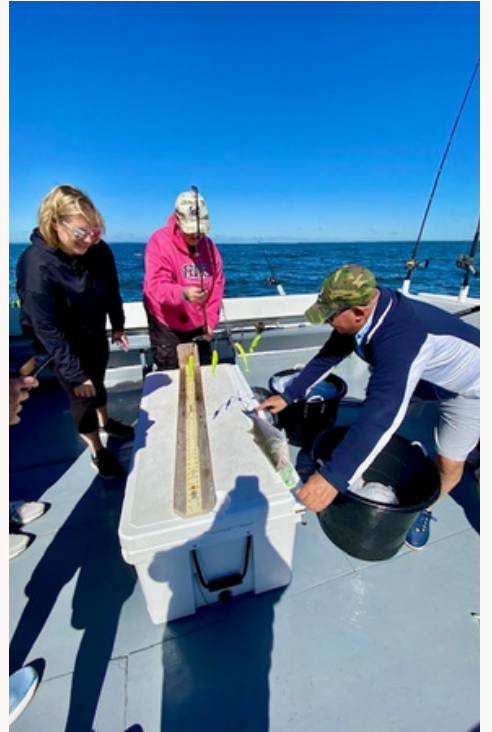
Contact Henly Ervin, GM Risk Management and Business Planning hervin@usmmi.com for submission details





FISH ON USMMI





USMMI Safety Statistics as of 31 January 2025

Launch of the LTI-Free Campaign for Q1 2025: A Commitment to Safety

USMMI has launched our first LTI-Free Campaign for Q1 of 2025, with a strong focus on continuous safety improvement. We have been LTI-Free for 2 months now and want to continue our company goal to maintain a zero-LTI record and continue fostering a culture where everyone returns home safely.

The topics we've chosen for the campaign so far have been directly guided by our near-miss data, which has been instrumental in identifying areas of focus for improving safety. This data serves as a valuable tool to highlight potential risks before they escalate into more serious incidents, allowing us to target key areas that need attention.

Here's a quick review of the safety topics covered during the first eight weeks of the campaign:

- **WK1:** Slips, Trips, and Falls – Addressing common causes of these incidents, based on near-miss reports.
- **WK2:** Watertight Door Safety – Focusing on proper maintenance and operation, after reviewing past near misses involving watertight doors.
- **WK3:** PPE Safety Tips and Reminders – Emphasizing the correct usage of PPE, based on near-miss data involving equipment mishandling.
- **WK4:** Entering Enclosed Spaces on Ships – Targeting risks associated with confined space entry, identified through our incident tracking.
- **WK5:** Compressed Air Safety – Highlighting safety protocols when dealing with compressed air systems, a recurring issue in near-miss reports.
- **WK6:** Ladder Safety – Focused on safe ladder usage and inspection following near-miss incidents related to falls from ladders.
- **WK7:** Safe Lifting Techniques – Addressing improper lifting techniques, which have been identified as a leading cause of near misses.
- **WK8:** A Reminder – Small Decisions Can Lead to Big Consequences – Reflecting on how seemingly minor oversights can lead to significant safety incidents.

Each of these topics has been selected based on real-world insights drawn from our near-miss data, which has been crucial in shaping the campaign to ensure it's as effective as possible.

We encourage everyone to stay engaged in the campaign and keep up the momentum as we continue to work together toward continuous safety improvement. Your contributions and vigilance make all the difference in keeping our record LTI-free. Remember, safety is not just about compliance—it's about protecting each other and preventing accidents before they happen.

Let's continue to focus on the details, stay proactive, and make 2025 our safest year yet!

