

SAFETY SCUTTLEBUTT

APRIL 2025



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USMMI

Think Safe. Act Safe. Be Safe



The Marine Safety and Standards (MSS) Department entered 2025 with a strategic focus to continue to implement a behavioral based safety model that centers on identifying hazardous conditions before they become potential incidents. Data from the previous three years identified that a majority of USMMI lost time incidents (LTI) occurred during the first quarter of a calendar year. Our Safety Analyst Jordan D'Hereaux led the effort to initiate an "LTI Free First Quarter" concentrated safety campaign that included weekly safety topics and the creation of a new safety award incentive program. The topics selected for the campaign were taken directly from near miss data submitted by USMMI ships and safety alerts from our regulatory/standards organizations. Feedback from the campaign and near miss data contributed to an updated Job Safety Analysis (JSA) guide and greater integration within the Nautical Science software. During 2025, you will continue to see safety and workflow process improvements as Alex Merz works with our shoreside staff and crew to streamline and improve common operational and administrative tasks within our Safety Management System (SMS) and Nautical Systems.

The past year has been characterized by change in our SMS procedures and how we are documenting compliance, audit, and inspection activities. These adjustments are being made to bring the company into better alignment with standards that will prepare the USMMI for future growth opportunities. We appreciate your patience as we work to implement a system that is designed to decrease the administrative burden of safety and standards activities while also increasing the use of work instructions and process flows to guide users. Your patience is appreciated as we navigate this process, and we welcome all feedback on implementation.

The MSS staff is looking forward to additional ship visits over the summer. Our first round of visits was intended to be an introduction to our new staff and familiarization with your ships. You will see a shift in these visits to more targeted engagements that will be driven by your specific safety and process needs. Our time on-board is meant to provide you in-person training and evaluation of operations to improve risk management. These visits directly affect our safety program, and we believe there is no substitute for personal engagements that contribute to your safety on-board USMMI ships. Thank you for your commitment to a safe workplace!



**DIRECTOR OF MSS,
MATTHEW SPOLARICH**



Risk Management Good Practice: Liferafts

GOOD PRACTICE

- ✓ Correctly stowed and secured
- ✓ Ready for immediate manual and float-free deployment
- ✓ Instructions for use clearly visible



Life rafts are provided for your safety in case your ship sinks. Valuable time may be lost if they are not stored properly.



BAD PRACTICE

- ✗ Liferaft covered and excessively lashed
- ✗ Not ready for immediate use

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





CYBERSECURITY ADVISORY: PHISHING THREATS REMAIN ACTIVE

Phishing attempts continue to be a significant threat vector targeting maritime and office-based systems alike. These attacks often masquerade as legitimate communications—ranging from vendor inquiries to internal IT alerts—and are designed to harvest credentials, deploy malware, or gain lateral access to critical infrastructure.

Technical Best Practices to Mitigate Risk:

- Inspect email headers and return-paths for discrepancies between the displayed name and actual domain origin.
- Avoid interacting with embedded links or attachments unless the sender's identity and intent are fully verified.
- Enable multi-factor authentication (MFA) wherever possible; this adds an additional layer of defense even if credentials are compromised.
- Maintain endpoint protection and ensure automatic updates are enabled for antivirus and OS security patches.
- Report anomalies immediately—forward suspicious emails to suspicious-email@usmmi.com for analysis and response.

If a message triggers your suspicion, treat it as hostile until proven otherwise. Phishing campaigns often succeed through social engineering, so vigilance remains our first line of defense.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING RESOURCES

The last USMMI crew survey identified that our mariners have an interest in mental health and well-being resources. The Innovative Maritime Emotional Intelligence Center (IMEQ), in collaboration with our P&I Insurance Club, UKP&I, offers a FREE IMEQ Seafarers App, which is a well-being application designed for seafarers.

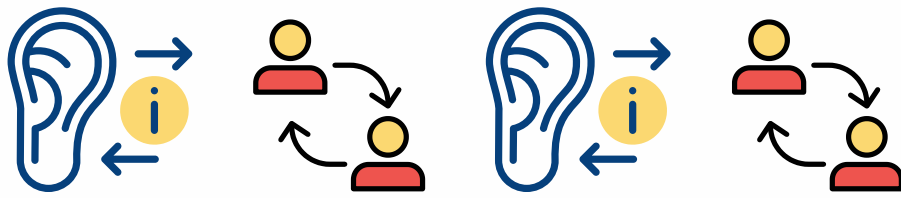
The IMEQ Seafarers App features the following:

- **Wide Range of Topics:** Over 100 articles on mental health, physical health, spirituality, social issues, and meditation.
- **Expert Contributions:** Content compiled by specialists in various fields.
- **Tailored for Seafarers:** Designed to address the unique challenges faced by maritime professionals.
- **Available on Major Platforms:** Accessible via Google Play Store and App Store.
- **Cost-Free:** Offered free of charge, as part of the IMEQ Well Being Initiative with the UK P&I Club.
- **Regular Updates:** Ensures up-to-date information and insights.
- **User-Friendly Interface:** Easy navigation for efficient use.
- **Interactive Features:** May include quizzes and self-assessment tools.
- **Offline Access:** Suitable for environments with limited internet connectivity

DOWNLOAD NOW



[CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD NOW](#)



STRENGTHENING SHIPBOARD SAFETY THROUGH INFORMATION EXCHANGE

Why Information Sharing Onboard Matters

Onboard a ship, every action—from navigating tight channels to performing maintenance—relies on teamwork and shared awareness. That's why information exchange between mariners isn't just helpful—it's critical. Whether it's passing along a machinery issue during a watch turnover or alerting others to changing weather conditions, timely and clear communication ensures safe, efficient operations.

A strong culture of information sharing leads to fewer misunderstandings, faster responses in emergencies, and smoother day-to-day operations. It helps everyone stay aligned with the ship's mission and reduces the risk of errors that can lead to injury or equipment damage.

Key Reminders for Mariners:

- Communicate clearly and regularly during watch handovers.
- Share updates on equipment status, safety concerns, or navigation changes immediately.
- Ask questions if unclear—good communication is a two-way street.
- Support junior crew members by sharing knowledge and lessons learned.

Promoting open communication onboard isn't just about following procedures—it's about looking out for each other and working as one crew.



Safety Refresher: Hand Safety

Your Hands Are Your Tools — Protect Them

Life and work at sea demand constant use of our hands — for maintenance, handling lines, operating machinery, and even preparing meals. Yet hand injuries remain one of the most common types of shipboard incidents. From cuts and burns to crushed fingers and chemical exposure, most of these injuries are preventable with the right precautions.

Causes of Hand Injuries

Hand injuries are among the most common onboard incidents. Common causes include:

- Sharp edges on equipment or surfaces
- Lack of hazard awareness
- Disregard for established safety procedures
- Distractions or complacency during tasks
- Inadequate or improper use of hand protection

Safety Recommendations

To mitigate the risk of hand injuries:

- Hazard Identification: Before starting any task, inspect the area for potential hazards like sharp edges or pinch points.
- Use Appropriate PPE: Select and wear gloves suitable for the specific task. Ensure they fit well and are in good condition. Utilize the USMMI PPE Matrix SMS Procedure 3013A.
- Tool Selection: Use the correct tools for the job. Avoid makeshift solutions that can compromise safety.
- Maintain Focus: Stay attentive and avoid distractions. Ensure clear communication with fellow crew members during tasks.
- Regular Inspections: Conduct routine checks of equipment and work areas to identify and rectify potential hazards.

Pre-Task Checklist

Before commencing any task:

1. Identify Hazards: Look for sharp edges, moving parts, or other potential dangers.
2. Assess Risks: Determine the likelihood and severity of potential injuries.
3. Implement Controls: Use appropriate PPE, ensure tools are in good condition, and establish safe work procedures.
4. Communicate: Discuss the task with your team, ensuring everyone is aware of potential hazards and safety measures

GUIDE TO ANSI CUT LEVELS

WHICH ANSI LEVEL DO I CHOOSE?

CROSSWALK BETWEEN ANSI CUT LEVELS NEEDED FOR SPECIFIC JOB TASKS AS IT APPLIES TO THE MARITIME INDUSTRY

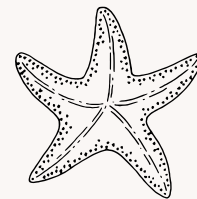
| Old ANSI Level | New ANSI Level | Cut Hazard Level | Maritime Industry Applications |
|----------------|----------------|----------------------|--|
| 1 (200) | A1 | Light (200g) | Routine stores handling, unpacking provisions, securing lightweight items, minor maintenance tasks |
| 2 (500) | A2 | Light/Medium (500g) | Deck maintenance, light line handling, unpacking crates, basic mechanical tasks in engine room |
| 3 (1000) | A3 | Light/Medium (1000g) | Handling mooring lines, paint prep, securing cargo, light fabrication, deck and galley equipment maintenance |
| 4 (1500) | A4 | Medium (1500g) | Handling glassware and galley items, small pipe fitting, carpentry repairs, engine room tasks |
| 5 (3500) | A5 | Medium/Heavy (2200g) | Fabrication tasks, winch operations, pipe fitting, moderate rigging jobs, HVAC maintenance |
| 6 (4000) | A6 | High (3000g) | Heavy rigging, lifeboat maintenance, cutting tools usage, pump overhauls, engine overhauls |
| 7 (5000) | A7 | High (4000g) | Steelwork repair, structural fitting, chain and anchor handling, working with sharp metal objects |
| 8 (6000) | A8 | High (5000g) | High-risk cutting, fabrication, chipping slag, removing rust and scaling, working with broken metal |
| 9 (6000) | A9 | High (6000g) | Extreme metalwork, emergency hull repairs, sharp tool handling, advanced welding/cutting in confined spaces |

REMINDER

MAKE SURE TO LOOK AT THE ANSI CUT LEVEL AND DESCRIPTION OF EACH GLOVE IN THE USMMI STANDARDIZED PPE HIERARCHY TO CHOOSE THE PROPER GLOVE APPROPRIATE FOR THE JOB TASK



SAFETY STARS



SHENANDOAH TRADER
ABM, JOHNNIE CARSWELL

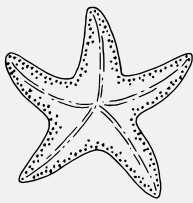
“Johnnie has displayed incredible attention to safety and detail when working over the side rigging the accommodation/pilot ladders, during mooring operations, and during CONSOL operations. These are some of the most dangerous evolutions we do on board and his behavior helps keep himself and his fellow shipmates out of harms way.

Johnnie exceeds expectations on a daily basis and maintains a good attitude while doing so. His actions/behaviors have a significant impact on the safety culture on deck. I am pleased to present our crew safety recognition award to him!” - Chief Mate Grzymkowski

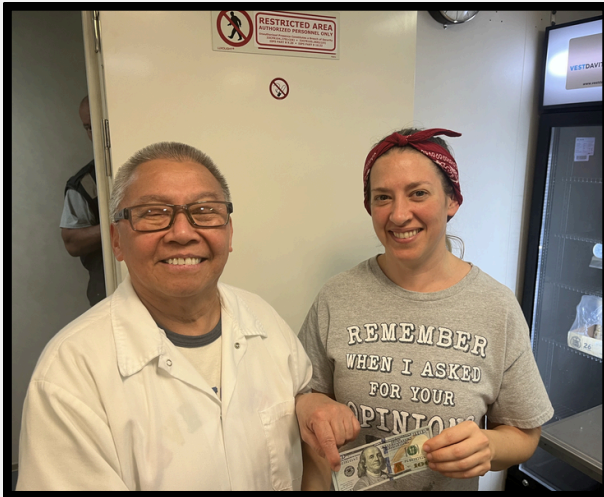
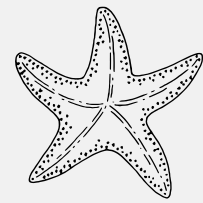
SHENANDOAH TRADER
2AE,
CHARLES BRAGG

“2nd Assistant Engineer Charles Bragg with help and supervision from 1st Assistant Engineer Max Neubelt, safely and successfully cleaned the HFO Service Tank on board the Shenandoah Trader. Charles and Max worked safely and efficiently by utilizing company SMS policy for tank entry. Observing all safety precautions, resulted in an accident free job. Special thanks goes to Charles for accepting a dirty job, doing it safely and efficiently and improving engine room operations as a result.” - Chief Engineer Halstead





SAFETY STARS



OCEAN TRADER,
CHIEF COOK GRACE HILGENDORF

“I want to congratulate Chief Cook GRACE HILGENDORF for her outstanding commitment to safety and her exceptional work ethics. Her attention to details and proactive approach have greatly enhanced our safety protocols and set a high standard for the entire team. Her hard work does not go unnoticed and greatly appreciated.

“- Chief Steward Gamboa

OCEAN TRADER,
QMED E. ADEOTI

“Mr. Adeoti has been stationed at the bunker station whenever SLOPS or sewage is pumped ashore. He has had no spills or leaks at the bunker station. Manny always checks for proper alignment of product being pumped ashore.”- Chief Engineer Andrews



OCEAN TRADER,
AB JESSIE MERCED

“AB Merced witnessed a fork truck drive over an electrical cord and drag it a few feet on the deck. Ab Merced then went and unplugged the cord and inspected it finding that the copper wires were now exposed, he and AB Williams then took the cord out of service and gave it to the electrician to have a new end put on the cord.

”-Chief Mate Atwood





USMMI ENDORSES SHIPS FOR AMERICA ACT: A MAJOR STEP FORWARD FOR AMERICAN MARITIME STRENGTH

U.S. Marine Management, LLC (USMMI) proudly supports the bipartisan, bicameral SHIPS for America Act, newly introduced in Congress by Senator Mark Kelly, Congressman Garamendi, Senator Todd Young, and Congressman Kelly. This landmark legislation marks a critical step toward revitalizing American shipbuilding, bolstering our domestic maritime industrial base, and reinforcing national security.

The SHIPS for America Act aims to:

- Rebuild and expand America's shipbuilding capacity
- Modernize the U.S. commercial maritime fleet
- Strengthen supply chain resilience and reduce dependence on foreign shipping
- Promote good-paying, middle-class maritime jobs
- Reassert American maritime leadership in global trade and defense readiness

At USMMI, we recognize that our nation's strength at sea underpins its strength on land. The SHIPS for America Act is a bold, necessary response to decades of decline in U.S. shipbuilding and merchant fleet capacity. We are pleased to join over 50 industry stakeholders in endorsing this legislation, and we commend the leadership of its sponsors for putting forward a comprehensive plan to secure the future of American shipping.

As noted by our President, Stephen Carmel:

"This is a consequential moment for our industry. The SHIPS for America Act offers a long-overdue investment in the maritime infrastructure that keeps our economy moving and our nation secure.

U.S. Marine Management is fully committed to supporting this legislation and the vision it represents."

We encourage our industry partners, policymakers, and maritime workforce to join us in advocating for swift passage of this bill. Together, we can ensure the U.S. maritime industry remains a pillar of national strength and economic opportunity for generations to come.

Click the underlined link below to review the official press release from Senator Mark Kelly's office and learn more about how the SHIPS for America Act will shape the future of our industry:

👉 [SHIPS for America Act Press Release](#)

4 Reasons We Need the **SHIPS for America Act**



Only 1.5%
of cargo imported into
the United States comes
on a U.S.-flag vessel

Source: MARAD 2000 – 2016 U.S.-Flag Privately-Owned Fleet Summary and
MARAD Calculation using CBP, Census, and commercial data sources.



64%
of new ships
built in 2023 were
built in China,
up from just 5% in 1999

Source: Shipping and Shipbuilding Markets: Annual Review 2024 (BRS Group, 2024)



The cost of operating U.S.-flag ships **continues to increase** compared to foreign-flag ships

Source: The Operating Cost Differential U.S. versus Foreign-Flag Based on
MSP Operators' 2022 Operating Costs, Navigistics Consulting, April 2023

**Fewer than
200 vs. More than
6,000**

Chinese-flag vessels outnumber U.S.-flag ships

by more than 30 to 1

Sources: MARAD, "U.S. Flag Fleet", 2024,
UNCTAD, January 2023

USMMI Safety Statistics as of 31 March 2025

In March 2025, we recorded 22 near misses, highlighting critical areas for continued improvement in our safety practices. The top three causal factors identified were machinery related to cargo operations, policy and procedure adherence, and situational awareness.

It remains essential that we focus on maintaining the reliability of cargo machinery, reinforcing procedural compliance, and strengthening situational awareness across all shipboard operations. By learning from these incidents and addressing their root causes, we can further cultivate a strong safety culture and protect both our people and our assets.

Here are some key reflections based on the March 2025 safety metrics:

Machinery – Cargo Operations:

The number of machinery-related near misses specific to cargo handling indicates a need for increased vigilance during loading, discharging, and cargo transfer operations.

- Are cargo systems being inspected thoroughly before use and monitored continuously during operations?
- Do crew members have the necessary training and understanding of cargo-specific machinery to respond effectively to abnormalities?

Policy and Procedure Adherence:

Several incidents involved deviations from established protocols, suggesting a gap in either awareness or execution of critical procedures.

- Are procedures clearly communicated, understood, and readily available during operations?
- Are supervisors reinforcing procedural compliance during routine tasks and monitoring for shortcuts or deviations?

Situational Awareness:

As in prior months, lapses in situational awareness played a role in near misses, particularly during routine tasks.

- Are we providing enough training that encourages crew members to pause, assess, and adapt to changing conditions?
- What tools or practices can we implement to promote better communication and hazard recognition?

Improvement Opportunities:

- Can we implement or enhance cargo-specific risk assessments before operations begin?
- Would scenario-based drills or briefings improve understanding and adherence to critical procedures?
- How can we better integrate real-time feedback and communication to help maintain awareness during complex or fast-paced operations?

By proactively addressing these factors and engaging the crew in continuous improvement efforts, we can reduce the risk of future incidents and ensure a safer, more efficient shipboard environment.

