

SYNOPSIS

At 2258 on 19 February 2010, a German shore worker was fatally injured on board the oil/chemical tanker *Bro Arthur*.

Bro Arthur had part-discharged at Rotterdam before arriving in Hamburg to offload her remaining crude palm oil cargo. A team of three cargo “sweepers” had been arranged under the operational direction of a supercargo. While exiting No 2 cargo tank on completion of the “sweeping” operation, one of the “sweepers” fell to the bottom of the tank.

The postmortem toxicology report identified that the casualty was under the influence of a variety of prescription and illegal drugs which would have caused severe impairment. All the evidence suggests that he fell from the vertical ladder as he lost his hand grip on the slippery surface. He had not been provided with a safety harness or fall arrestor.

The casualty had been sub-contracted by a German cargo tank cleaning company. This investigation does not seek to explore German contractual arrangements or legislative issues; these are being addressed, as appropriate, by the German authorities.

The MAIB investigation found that *Bro Arthur's* safety management lacked direction in a number of organisational and equipment areas. There were issues relating to superficial risk assessments, inaccurate atmosphere testing routines, weak control of contractors, an unwillingness to confront individuals when their condition compromised safety, non-compliance with mandatory safety drills and unsuitable casualty recovery equipment.

Recommendations have been made to the Maritime and Coastguard Agency and the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) which are designed to:

- Improve the control and safety of shore contractors who are employed on board vessels in port.
- Highlight the need for the provision of suitable portable rescue equipment that can be used for the recovery of personnel from deep cargo tanks.
- Ensure ships' staff are trained in the use of such equipment.

Recommendations have also been made to *Bro Arthur's* management company and the manufacturer of atmosphere monitoring equipment supplied to the vessel.

The MAIB has produced a safety flyer, which contains details of the accident and appropriate safety lessons for promulgation to the industry via the ICS and the International Group of P&I Clubs.