

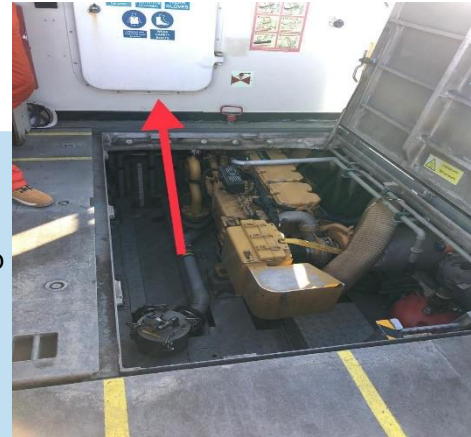
Worker Falls into Open Hatch

WHAT HAPPENED?

After completing a bunkering activity, a vessel mechanic held a door handle with one hand and the door frame with another when he tried to walk around an open hatch of an engine compartment from the pilot house. He fell into the open hatch, hitting and fracturing his cheek.

FACTS & FINDINGS

- The Vessel Mechanic left the hatch open and unattended when he was conducting his task as this was accepted practice. He was aware of the open hatch.
- There was an alternative route to get from the front of the vessel to the engine compartment side. It was not necessary for IP to pass through the pilot house.
- The vessel operating manual specified that the pilot house door was not to be used when the hatch was open.



ROOT CAUSES

- ❖ **Risk Normalization** - It was an accepted practice for vessel personnel to leave the hatch door open during bunkering activities.
- ❖ **Procedure not followed (Not enforced)** – The operations procedure which prohibited the use of the pilot house door when the engine compartment hatch was open was not followed. Failure to comply to the rule by crew members was an acceptable practice and there was lack of procedure enforcement by supervisors (Captain).

WHAT IS RISK NORMALIZATION?

Risk Normalization is the complacency, indiscipline or conscious decision by workers to ignore safe working procedures. It is where risky or dangerous behaviors or practices gradually become acceptable over time.

How Leaders Can Combat Risk Normalization:

Think back to when you were learning to drive a car. The chances are good that you were cautious, always using turn signals, fully stopping at all stop signs and traffic lights, and obeying the speed limit. Now think about your driving recently. Do you exercise the same level of caution? Or do you sometimes speed, change lanes abruptly, drive closely to the vehicle in front of you, or even use your cell phone?

This is an example of risk normalization, a phenomenon where risky or dangerous behaviors or practices gradually become acceptable over time. Driving today isn't any less dangerous than it was, but you're more comfortable with the risks, and you behave more boldly.

1. **Be on the lookout for complacency** – Look out for signs of complacency such as workers simply going through the motions.
2. **Lead by example** - If you're not following company rules, you send the message that doing so isn't important.
3. **Empower and encourage coworkers to speak up** - take reported concerns seriously and let the worker who reported the concern know you appreciate their willingness to say something.