Entering void spaces – Harmful Gases

WHAT HAPPENED

Confined spaces can be deadly whether on board ship or shore based.

A number of people are killed or seriously injured in confined spaces each year in the UK. This happens in a wide range of industries, from those involving complex plant to simple storage vessels. Those killed include people working in the confined space and those who try to rescue them without proper training and equipment, learning points for entry into a confined space remain pertinent for reducing those serious consequences.

An incident alert recently issued by the London Port Authority highlighted an example of an unexpected hazardous situation that was encountered during an annual inspection on a motor barge. Due to the correct procedures being followed the hazard was identified without anyone being placed at risk. A confined space within the barge had dangerously high levels of carbon monoxide even though no machinery operated in this space, it is assumed the carbon monoxide had emanated from an adjoining engine compartment. Please click on additional pdf to view the full alert.





LEARNING POINTS / ACTIONS TAKEN

It is important to remember a number of key safety issues prior to entering enclosed spaces, such as those commonly found on-board all vessels. As in this instance, due consideration should be given to the nature and use of adjoining spaces and whether bulkhead penetrations or ventilation ducting routed through the space could impact on the outcome of the enclosed space risk assessment. In summary:

- Only enter an enclosed space if there are no other options
- Ensure that the space is properly ventilated
- Have a rescue plan and appropriate rescue equipment available
- Always conduct atmosphere testing prior to entry.

LOCATION:	**MARINE & SHIP TO SHORE**	**ALERT STATUS:**	**Normal**
ACTIVITY:	**MAINTENANCE & HOUSEKEEPING**	**DATE ISSUED:**	**04/03/2015 10:41:16**
SUB ACTIVITY:	**N/A**	**INCIDENT No:**	**00406**