

Safety Alert

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Subject: Incorrect Footwear Results in Injury

What Happened / Narrative

A vessel's cook was working in the galley, cleaning up post mealtime, when he slipped and braced his outstretched arm/hand against the corner of the galley sink. He immediately felt slight discomfort, but there was later swelling and increased pain. On arrival in port 2 days later the IP was disembarked for medical examination. The IP was diagnosed with a closed, undisplaced metacarpal fracture with associated wrist tenderness and reduced movement.

Why Did it Happen / Cause

- The injured person was not wearing approved safety footwear. The footwear in use (trainers) had worn soles, unsuitable for the environment, and lacked slip resistance.
- A known hazard (slippery galley surfaces) was not adequately controlled
- PPE requirements were not followed, despite being defined in the company PPE Matrix. This deviation from procedure was not identified or challenged.

Causes identified:

- Bypassing safety controls – failure to wear mandated PPE
- Complacency during routine tasks
- Failure to reinforce and enforce PPE compliance
- Human factors – poor risk perception in a familiar work environment

Corrective Actions Taken / Recommendations

1. Re-emphasise compliance with the PPE Matrix across the fleet
2. Reinforce STOP Work Authority and intervention expectations
3. Review and update risk assessments for galley operations
4. Conduct targeted safety campaigns on slips, trips, and falls
5. Verify PPE condition and suitability during inspections and audits

Photographs / Supporting Information



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