



Accident Report
Serious Harm to Crewmember
Genco Sugar
20 January 2006
Class C



NARRATIVE

On 7 January 2006, at 1035 hours New Zealand Daylight Time (NZDT), **Genco Sugar** arrived in Bluff with a cargo of aluminium. After discharge, the vessel proceeded to Nelson, then Gisborne to load logs. At 0912 hours on 19 January, it left Gisborne for Tauranga.

On 20 January 2005, at 0206 hours, **Genco Sugar** was all fast starboard side to berth No. 11, Mt Maunganui (See *Photograph 1*). The crew worked until 0300 hours, raising deck cranes and opening hatches.



Photograph 1
Genco Sugar starboard side to berth No. 11, Mt Maunganui Wharf

At 0330 hours, four gangs boarded and commenced loading logs. From 0730 hours to 0800 hours, the stevedores had a break, during which the crew were to raise and secure portable log stanchions ready for loading on deck.

At 0730 hours, the Bosun and three seamen turned out to rig the log stanchions at the starboard side of No. 2 hatch. One seaman was instructed to drive the No. 1 crane. The Bosun and a seaman (No. 10 on the crew list and referred to in this report as CL10) were to rig the portable stanchions at the forward end of the hatch in readiness for them being raised by the crane. The 3rd seaman had been sent forward to the store and the Chief Officer was checking rigging at the after end of No. 2 hatch.



Photograph 2
Log stanchions at the port side of No. 2 hatch.

The Bosun instructed seaman CL10 to attach a shackle to a lug, about four metres above the base of a permanent stanchion. CL10 put on a safety harness and climbed up the fixed stanchion ladder. He carried a shackle and the soft eye end of the rigging wire. The Bosun helped him by lifting up the bight of the wire.



Photograph 3

Wire for rigging portable log stanchions

When seaman CL10 reached a level where the lug could be reached, he stopped climbing then suddenly and without warning fell to the deck. On the way down, he struck the lower part of the fixed log stanchion. He had not, by then, attached the lifeline of his safety harness to the ladder.

The Chief Officer heard someone call out and turned to see the injured seaman lying on deck. He informed the Stevedore Foreman who called for an ambulance.

Ambulance staff attended to the injured seaman on the deck of **Genco Sugar**. At about 0830 hours, he was taken by ambulance to Tauranga Hospital. The seaman suffered serious injuries to his spine and was repatriated to China on Sunday 5 February 2006. The Doctor recommended that he remain off work for three months.



Photograph 4
Portable log stanchions at the port side of No. 2 hatch, after rigging.

The Ship

Genco Sugar is a log bulk carrier with the following ship's particulars:

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| IMO Number: | 9191034 |
| Flag: | Hong Kong |
| Year of Build: | 1998 |
| Gross Tonnage: | 18 036 |
| Owner: | Genco Sugar Ltd |
| Operator: | Wallem Ship Management Ltd |
| Classification Society: | American Bureau of Shipping |

Genco Sugar had a Safety Management Certificate issued by the American Bureau of Shipping on 29 September 2005, which was valid until 28 February 2006.

Master & Crew

The Master held a Certificate as Master of ships of 3000 GRT or more, issued by the Tainjin Maritime Safety Administration of the People's Republic of China, and a Certificate as Deck Officer Class 1, issued by the Hong Kong Marine Department. Both were valid until 11 June 2007. He had served at sea for 20 years, as Master for four years and as Master of another log ship for one year. He joined **Genco Sugar** on 12 November 2005.

The Chief Officer held a Certificate as Chief Mate of ships of 300 GRT or more, issued by the Tainjin Maritime Safety Administration of the People's Republic of China, and a Certificate as Deck Officer Class 2 issued by the Hong Kong Marine Department. Both were valid until 8 June 2010. He had served at sea since 1985 and had previously sailed on **Genco Sugar** for about 14 months. This time he joined **Genco Sugar** on 11 October 2005.

The Bosun had worked at sea since 1992. He joined **Genco Sugar**, his third ship, as Bosun, on 20 October 2005. He had worked for two years on board log ships.

The injured seaman was born in 1982 and went to sea in 2004. He joined **Genco Sugar** on 9 October 2005.

Safety Considerations

The injured seaman was wearing safety shoes, safety helmet, gloves, work clothes and a safety belt with a lifeline. He went to bed at about 2100 hours the night before the accident and got up for the ship's arrival in Tauranga. He was in bed again between 0300 and 0700 hours. He said he did not feel tired. He did not know exactly why he fell, but the ladder rungs were wet and slippery.

The only persons to witness the accident was the Bosun and a seaman who was driving the crane. The Bosun stated that CL10 was carrying a light wire, while the crane driver remembered he had a small wire rope over one shoulder. It appears that seaman CL10 took the wire and possibly a shackle with him as he climbed up the stanchion. He fell from a height of about four metres above the deck.

Part III, Section 2.4 of **Genco Sugar's** Safety Management Manual dealt with the carriage of logs. Although there were instructions for preparation for cargo and loading on deck, there was nothing specific about raising portable log stanchions.

Chapter 15 of the Wallem Ship Management Ltd Safety Manual refers ships personnel to the UK MCA Code of Safe Working Practices for Merchant Seamen, Personal Injury Prevention – a guide to good practice (NE P&I) and provides the following advice when working in elevated locations where falls are possible:

- a) Take special precautions in locations without handrails
- b) Wear safety lines when working in locations unprotected against falling more than about four feet. Lesser heights may also call for safety lines.
- c) Temporary barriers should be rigged to prevent falling where safety lines cannot be used
- d) Use safety harnesses rather than safety belts, since harnesses provide more protection against injury.

The Wallem Ship Management Ltd Safety Manual provides checklist No. 22 - Permit to work aloft and/or overside. This was not sighted at the time of investigation.

The Chief Officer maintained that the correct procedure was for the seaman to climb the ladder until he reached the pad eye. At this stage he should attach the lifeline of his safety harness to a rung of the ladder above the area where he needed to work. The person on deck should throw up a light line, with which he would pull up the required shackles and wire rope.

LESSONS LEARNED

The accident shows the danger of carrying equipment while climbing ladders.

Although the fixed stanchion ladders were in good condition, their rungs were wet with morning dew. This may have caused the seaman to lose his grip.

It is recommended that:

1. Wallem Ship Management Ltd amend their Safety Management procedures to include safe practices specifically for rigging log stanchions.