



## PRESS RELEASE

### Enclosed space entry: a deadly serious issue

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“Preventing deaths in enclosed spaces is a serious issue. It is a deadly serious issue, and one which the marine industry has to come to grips with,” said David Patraiko, The Nautical Institute’s Director of Projects, summing up at the end of the day of education, awareness and training around enclosed space incidents held by The Nautical Institute’s London Branch. More than 100 people from all branches of the shipping and offshore industry attended the event at North West Kent College, held in conjunction with Mines Rescue Marine on 11 September 2013 as part of London International Shipping Week.

More people die or are injured in enclosed spaces than through any other related onboard work activity. The largest problem is with spaces which are not perceived as dangerous – anchor lockers and deck stores which may suffer from oxygen depletion, for example. The issue persists despite numerous guidelines, safety regimes, operational procedures manuals and assurance surveys. If this is to change, there are four major areas which need to be tackled:

- **Culture**

Safety culture needs to be implemented at all levels, starting from the top. Adopting a shipboard enclosed space management plan based on onboard audits is a good new initiative. Procedures for Permits to Work need to be addressed.

- **Design**

Shipboard design and operation should minimise the need to go into enclosed spaces in the first place; escape possibilities should be designed in.

- **Equipment**

In many cases, crews are expected to use equipment that is not fit for purpose, or that is complex to use. In particular, firefighting equipment is not suitable for evacuating casualties from enclosed spaces.

- **Training and drills**

Good, frequent training is needed. This is a human element issue; only by working with the human element can it be solved.

After a morning of presentations outlining the scale and scope of the issues, the afternoon was devoted to finding practical solutions; starting with the possibilities for dynamic training that is more likely to be memorable and effective. Michael Lloyd and Adam Allan from Mines Rescue Marine outlined a system for the management of enclosed spaces that uses risk assessment to develop a 'traffic light' system making it clear what precautions are needed when entering any given space on a ship. Finally, a simulated rescue carried out by Mines Rescue Marine demonstrated the sheer difficulty of reaching and rescuing people who have become trapped in enclosed spaces – and the need for the right equipment to do so.

In addition to its input to IMO, the Institute will continue to use the full range of its activities (including publications, seminars and web forums) to eradicate the needless deaths and injuries arising from entry into enclosed spaces.

Reports of enclosed spaces incidents are freely available in the database of the Institute's Mariners' Alerting and Reporting Scheme (MARS) at <http://www.nautinst.org/en/forums/mars/search-all-mars-reports.cfm>. Type **enclosed spaces** into the keyword box.

Editor's notes:

The Nautical Institute is the international professional body for qualified seafarers and others with an interest in nautical matters. It provides a wide range of services to enhance the professional standing and knowledge of members who are drawn from all sectors of the maritime world. Founded in 1972, it has over 40 branches worldwide and some 7,000 members in over 110 countries.

In 2012, it was the proud recipient of the Training Award for its range of human element video clips at the Lloyd's List Global Awards.