

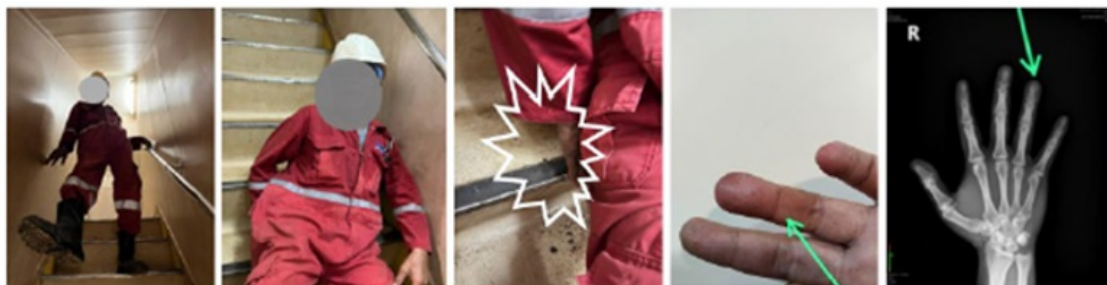
Slipped on stairs, broken finger

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A worker slipped while descending the staircase, and broke his finger as a result

What happened?

As he fell he reflexively used his right hand to support his body, and it was pinned under his weight, causing a fracture at the tip of his right ring finger.



What went well?

- Immediate first aid was provided on board (ice compression to reduce swelling).
- The worker was quickly taken to hospital for an X-ray and diagnosis, and further medical treatment, including surgery, was arranged the same day.

How could this outcome have been better?

- Had the worker held onto the hand rail properly in descending, whilst he might still have slipped, his fall could have been more easily arrested – and he wouldn't now have a broken finger.

What do we learn?

- There's a right way and a wrong way to go down a narrow staircase – particularly on a vessel which may be moving in a seaway.
- Keep three points of contact – don't go down stairs without using the hand-rail.
- Familiarity breeds contempt, as they say: don't underestimate the importance of safety observance in everyday matters like going down stairs, opening and closing heavy doors etc.

Members may wish to refer to:

- [Take care on the stairs – IMCA safety promotional material](#)

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