



General fisheries work

There are many hazards likely to be encountered during routine work on the markets, on the quayside and whilst boarding fishing vessels secured to the quay. These hazards can be encountered by both, inspectors and administrative support staff, assisting with, for example, inspections at markets. It is extremely relevant therefore that all staff are conversant with safety procedures.

1. On the Market/Merchants Premises/Processing Operations

1.1 Appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) such as non slip boots/shoes, with protective toe caps, must be worn in the market environment. Head protection must be worn in the vicinity of operating vessels and on the markets.

1.2 Protective clothing, such as overalls must be worn and properly fastened when working in processing establishments, along with suitable gloves, where required.

1.3 Floor surfaces may have slip/trip hazards from icy, wet or muddy areas, uneven ground, poorly maintained flooring, plastic sheeting, dropped produce etc., Care must be taken on poor underfoot conditions.

1.4 Staff should keep well clear of all machinery (even if it does not appear to be working at the time) and ensure that they take note of and comply with safety procedures for the premises they may be visiting or other areas where they are required to work.

1.5 Staff should, at all times, remain vigilant and aware of the movement of fork lift trucks and other vehicles. Designated traffic routes should be avoided, wherever possible, and high visibility clothing must be worn. Whenever working in such areas, the persons in charge should be informed of your presence.

1.6 Fish boxes should be, wherever possible, lifted by 2 people to avoid back, or other injuries. There may be a risk of boxes/crates being knocked over or pushed onto staff by moving equipment (e.g. forklifts). Staff must ensure that their presence is made known to all staff working in the area.

1.7 Cold temperatures are to be expected in fish stores and suitable clothing, such as warm gloves and upper body clothes should be worn.

1.8 When hosting visitors to port areas, the senior MMO person present must ensure that appropriate PPE is worn and a full safety brief given before visitors accompany staff.

2. On the Quayside

2.1 Non-slip shoes/boots with protective toe caps must be worn. Hard hats must be worn at all times where cranes and derricks are working, or in designated hard hat areas.

2.2 When working on the Quayside in the dark staff must wear lifejackets, hard hats and high visibility jackets. Torches should also be carried.

2.3 Care should be taken when working near loading points and in the vicinity of vessels discharging their catch. There is a need to be extra vigilant in any areas where cargo is being discharged using derricks. Staff should at all times remain outside of any 'arc of danger' created by derricks.

2.4 There is a need to be extra vigilant when in the vicinity of ropes and wires. All staff should avoid standing too close to bights of rope or wire in case they suddenly come under tension.

2.5 Icy conditions, oil spills and fish slime can cause slippery conditions on the quayside. If areas have been gritted or salted, ensure that gritted paths are used.

2.6 Vehicles such as forklift trucks, may be working on the quay. High visibility clothing must be worn to ensure that the driver is able to see pedestrians.

3. Quayside Boarding of Vessels

3.1 Life jackets non-slip shoes/boots with good tread, and hard hats must be worn when boarding a vessel or crossing from one vessel to another. A whistle, and a light where possible, must be attached to the life jacket.

3.2 Inspectors must ensure they inform a colleague and/or crew member when about to board a vessel alongside the Quay. Extreme care must be taken when boarding vessels where many items of equipment on the deck can cause slip, trip and fall accidents. Awareness of underfoot conditions and deck landing areas must be taken into account before boarding is attempted.

3.3 Wherever possible, the gangway should be used, if there is one available, to avoid stepping across an open, or differing height, space.

3.4 Stepping from quaysides or ladders should not be attempted if the gap is considered excessive. Skippers should be requested to adjust the vessel position in comparison to the quayside if the engine is still running.

3.5 Awareness of tide times should be known, as vessel deck access and exit levels, in relation to the quayside, will change with the height of the tide. Weather conditions and forecasts also need to be considered.

3.6 Quayside ladders should be checked for suitability and condition before using and only used by one person at a time. Both hands should be free to ensure that the ladder can be gripped. If it is necessary to take gear on board a vessel, it should be lowered by rope or hung around the shoulder – never around the neck – ensuring that the equipment does not impede the operation of the lifejacket.

3.7 Officers should be aware of vessel equipment movement particularly when derricks are working. At night, embark/disembark from lit areas of the quayside wherever possible and carry/wear appropriate lighting (head torch). Inspectors must obey instructions given by the person in charge of vessel.

4. Inspections

4.1 Wherever possible joint inspections should be undertaken to minimise personal risk. This is especially so on night time inspections.

4.2 Where this is not practical or possible, the lone officer should ensure that they have a working mobile telephone with a suitable signal strength and use a “buddy” system to report their intentions to another colleague in the vicinity.

4.3 If there is no colleague in the vicinity, the Principal Marine Officer should be used as the “buddy”. If they are not available, the Duty Officer should replace the Principal Marine Officer in this role.

4.4 When using a “buddy” system, the marine officer should agree a report back call time with his colleague. If this call is not received by the “buddy”, they should attempt to contact the officer. If there is no response, the “buddy” should wait a few minutes and attempt again to contact the officer. If this call also fails, contacting the local police must be considered.

4.5 Confrontation should be avoided and officers should withdraw from inspections or discussions if an excessively aggressive situation arises during the inspection. Please also refer to the policy on “Abuse and Violence”

4.6 When monitoring unloading or inspecting fish catches from vessels, be aware of potential winch wire failure. Wherever possible, stand in a safe location away from potential travel of broken winch wire.