

SHIPPING

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# MARITIME



**REVIEW AFRICA**

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**AFRICAN  
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DECADE**

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**FRAP: A NATIONAL CRISIS?**

# PERSONAL SAFETY:

## IS IT COMMON SENSE OR IS TRAINING REQUIRED?

**T**ransnet National Ports Authority (TNPA) requires people entering the port to undergo safety induction training. The training consists of a video highlighting the potential risks a visitor to the port faces and the minimum personal protective equipment a person needs to wear when entering that particular area of the port.

In terms of Health and Safety legislation such training is a requirement and the extent of the training is dependent on the area and the nature of the business.

Those of us who are regular flyers are very familiar with the safety announcement that is made as the aircraft is being pushed back from the stand. I am always amazed how few people actually pay attention to this announcement. Thankfully, I have never had an incident on board a plane, and hopefully never will, but I often imagine how much panic there would be should an incident occur because too many of my fellow passengers failed to listen to the safety briefing, and do not know what to do.

Do we take our personal safety for granted and is safety a skill that can be trained? The answer to both questions is a resounding yes. Familiarity is the greatest killer and if our parents had not taught us to look left and right before crossing the street many of us would not have made it to adulthood.

In our industry, over the last six months, we have noted an increase in the number of accidents occurring on board vessels both in the port and at sea. A number of these accidents could easily have been avoided by just applying common sense. We often walk onto ships taking our safety for granted.

Last year, we investigated the deaths of two crewmembers who died as a result of entering an enclosed space without taking the required precautions.

### Reporting accidents

People are also unfamiliar with the reporting requirements following such accidents, whether at sea or in port. If an accident does occur on board a vessel then various organisations need to be contacted.

This includes the South African Maritime Safety Authority (SAMSA), who will carry out an investigation and the vessel will be required to complete an accident

report form that should be submitted to SAMSA as soon as possible, but at the latest 24 hours after the incident.

The information on the reports serves many purposes. Reports often contain vital information that can be used to educate people working in the harbour about personal safety issues. Many of the accidents that take place could easily have been avoided through vigilance and recognition of potential dangerous situations before they arise.

We have also noticed that local agents often forget to advise shipmasters that there is a duty to report accidents on board their vessels to local authorities. The master, in terms of ISM, will complete a report on the vessel and send the same to their head office. The head office will contact ISM to investigate the incident and advise what precautions can be taken to safe guard against future such accidents.

When we contact SAMSA to confirm that the accident has been reported, we are often surprised to learn that it has not been reported as required.

Ships' agents should, therefore, make it known to the master that all accidents on board the vessel must be reported to the local authorities.

If an accident does occur on board a vessel, the best option is to immediately contact one of our offices and we will assist the master in the completion of the SAMSA accident report, contact SAMSA, alert them to the incident and assist them in investigating the incident.

Prevention has always been better than cure and knowledge is a very powerful tool provided it is used and implemented effectively. Accidents can be avoided and training is a vital tool.

Do not take your personal safety for granted. Prior to entering an area one should immediately carry out a personal

## Judges seminar scheduled for mid 2014 in Nigeria

**T**he Nigerian Shippers' Council, in collaboration with the National Judicial Institute will hold the next Maritime Seminar for Judges from 10 – 12 June, 2014.

The Seminar, which is the 13th in the series, has been scheduled to take place in Abuja, Nigeria's capital city. As has been the practice, eminent resource persons will be drawn from within and outside Nigeria.

These will include experienced practitioners and erudite Jurists from within the Common Law Jurisdictions.

The Seminar has gained both national and international recognition as a veritable forum for the cross-fertilisation of ideas among the main beneficiaries of the seminar namely:

The Judges and Justices of the superior courts or record (Federal and States High Courts, Court of Appeal and Supreme Court), Legal Practitioners and Stakeholders in the Shipping and Transport industry.

The Seminar has been internationally acknowledged for attracting high quality discussions and presentations by eminent Jurists who participated as resource persons and participants each year.

Participation is open to Judges and Justices of Superior Courts of record, other Judicial Officers, Legal Practitioners, Policy makers and other Maritime Industry Stakeholders, both within and outside Nigeria.

risk assessment. One should look at ones surroundings and identify the work being carried out and the potential personal safety risks. Never let your guard down.

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