

Marine Safety Flash



A18-03 (15th Feb)

Heat Stress Event

Incident Overview

Whilst carrying out cargo operations on the back deck of a platform supply vessel (PSV) offshore North-West Australia, a crew member (IP) became sick with heat stress. The IP informed another crew member who notified the bridge. The IP was instructed to cease work, and proceeded to his cabin to take a cool shower, after which continued feeling unwell. The Chief Officer went to the hospital and issued oral rehydration salts. The IP condition was continually monitored until recovery. Other crew members were issued rehydration salts due to the hot conditions experienced on deck.

Key Findings

- (1) The type of overalls worn were considered a potential contributing factor.
- (2) The climate and time of year is conducive for heat stress.
- (3) The back deck of a PSV is enclosed, creating a harsher environment with regards to heat and ventilation.

Recommendations

- Ensure PPE is the best fit for the climate being worn.
- Plan activities with due consideration to heat and time of day.
- Ensure heat stress is a formal hazard/risk captured in the task specific risk assessment, with adequate controls in place to manage health impact.
- Consider watch schedule adjustments in summer months to enable sufficient breaks during the day.
- Consider a heat stress management plan or initiative for vessels working in hot climatic regions.
- Similar considerations to vessels working in cold climatic regions.