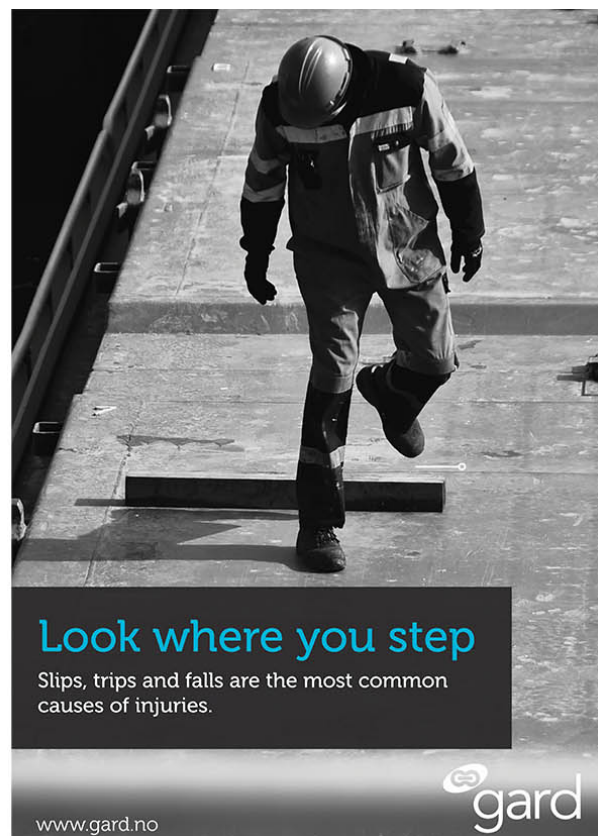


WHAT ARE THE MOST
COMMON CAUSES OF
INJURIES ON SHIPS?

SLIPS, TRIPS
AND FALLS



Keep an eye out for slip, trip and fall hazards onboard

Slips, trips and falls are among the most common causes of injuries on board ships and keeping an eye out for these hazards should be second nature.

Published 02 September 2024

In the 10 year period 2009 – 2018, slips, trips and falls, commonly referred to as STF, accounted for 20% of all crew injuries handled by Gard. In their [Annual Overview of Marine Casualties 2019](#), the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) also noted that STFs are the most frequent causes of personal injury.

Are all ranks susceptible to STF related injuries? The answer is yes, although some ranks feature more than others. We see that ratings are 60% more likely to be injured through STF related causes compared to officers. Amongst ratings, nearly 40% of all STF injuries have been to able bodied seamen (ABs), while among officers, chief officers and chief engineers combined account for 40% of all such injuries. STFs can cause various types of injuries, from a less severe sprain to more serious back injuries and fractures, and sometimes even fatalities.

Preventing STFs

[The Code of Safe Working Practices \(COSWP\)](#) recommends various good practices to reduce the risk of personal injuries as a result of STFs, such as:

- wearing suitable footwear,
- cleaning up all spillages,
- removing all obstructions,
- having anti-slip surfaces,
- holding handrail when using stairs,
- not standing on unsecured objects, and
- creating a visual workplace such as by using safety signage.

In addition, training our eyes to always look out for STF hazards, such as unguarded openings, loose cables, oil on deck etc. can help in greatly reducing the risk of an injury occurring. Such a common sense approach should become second nature.

Managing STF hazards

The International Labour Organization (ILO) and the UK Health and Safety Executive (HSE) have developed an online course for managing slips, trips and fall hazards. Although it does not talk specifically about the shipboard environment, many of the STF risks are similar across industries. The online course can be accessed [here](#).

More information

Gard Loss Prevention Poster: type: asset-hyperlink id: d84664ce010a4d96b760f0322bde132

Gard Insight: [Watch out for open manholes and displaced deck gratings](#)

[EMSA's Annual Overview of Marine Casualties and Incidents 2019](#)

The ILO's Occupational Safety topics: [Slips and trips](#)