

**Extracts from  
The United Kingdom  
Merchant Shipping  
(Accident Reporting and  
Investigation) Regulations  
2012**

**Regulation 5:**

“The sole objective of a safety investigation into an accident under these Regulations shall be the prevention of future accidents through the ascertainment of its causes and circumstances. It shall not be the purpose of such an investigation to determine liability nor, except so far as is necessary to achieve its objective, to apportion blame.”

**Regulation 16(1):**

“The Chief Inspector may at any time make recommendations as to how future accidents may be prevented.”

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**NOTE**

This bulletin is not written with litigation in mind and, pursuant to Regulation 14(14) of the Merchant Shipping (Accident Reporting and Investigation) Regulations 2012, shall be inadmissible in any judicial proceedings whose purpose, or one of whose purposes is to attribute or apportion liability or blame.

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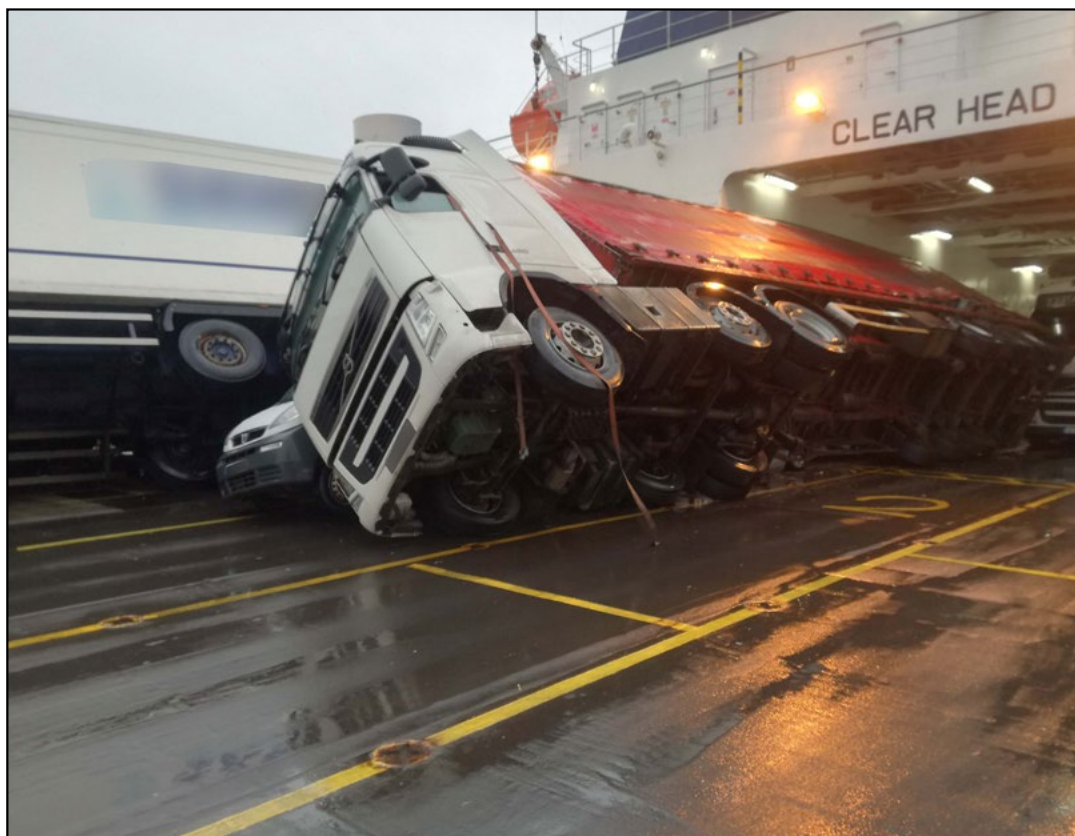
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## **Dangers posed to freight vehicle drivers by remaining in their vehicle cabs while on board ro-ro ferries at sea**



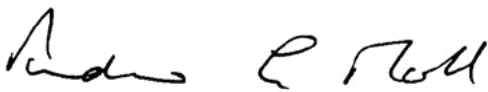
## MAIB SAFETY BULLETIN 1/2019

This document, containing safety lessons, has been produced for marine safety purposes only, based on information available to date.

*The Merchant Shipping (Accident Reporting and Investigation) Regulations 2012* provide for the Chief Inspector of Marine Accidents to make recommendations at any time during the course of an investigation if, in his opinion, it is necessary or desirable to do so.

The Marine Accident Investigation Branch is carrying out an investigation into the cargo shift of freight vehicles on board the ro-ro passenger ferry *European Causeway* while on passage from Larne to Cairnryan in Scotland.

The MAIB will publish a full report on completion of the investigation.



**Andrew Moll**  
**Chief Inspector of Marine Accidents**

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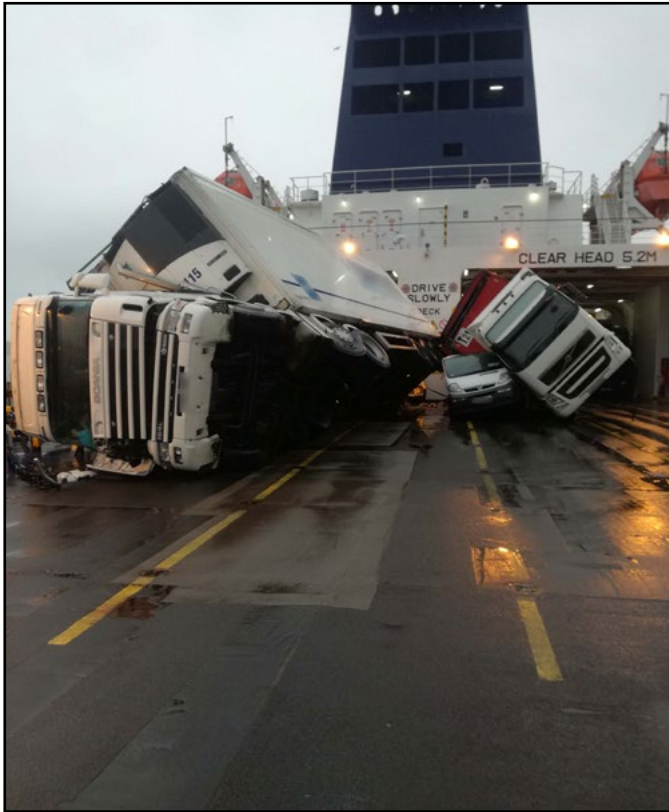
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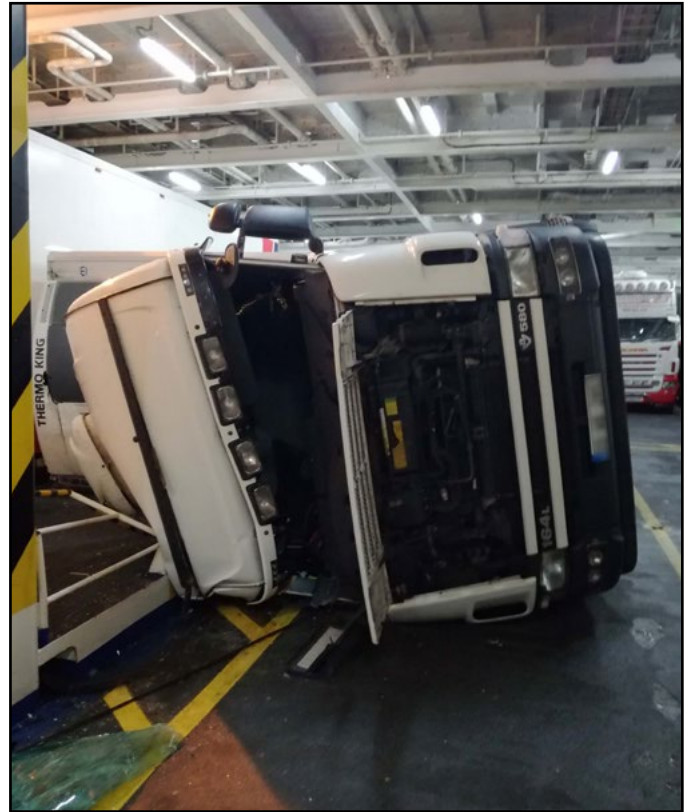
## BACKGROUND

The MAIB is investigating the shift and toppling over of freight vehicles (**Figures 1, 2, 3 and 4**) on board the P&O ro-ro passenger ferry *European Causeway* during heavy weather while on passage from Larne, Northern Ireland, to Cairnryan, Scotland.

In accordance with international regulations and industry best practice, P&O does not permit passengers to remain on the ro-ro decks when at sea.



**Figure 1:** Trucks on upper deck aft



**Figure 2:** Truck toppled over

## INITIAL FINDINGS

On 18 December 2018, *European Causeway* was on passage from Larne to Cairnryan when it encountered very strong winds and very rough seas, which caused the ship to roll heavily. As a result, 9 of the 40 freight vehicles on board toppled over, with several vehicles sustaining damage.

The MAIB investigation has found that at least six drivers had remained in their freight vehicle cabs during the crossing despite being instructed by the ship's crew to vacate the ro-ro deck after they had parked their vehicles.



**Figure 3:** Truck toppled over on main deck



Four drivers were found in the freight vehicles that had toppled over, with one remaining trapped until he could be freed by the emergency services that were waiting in Cairnryan.

Fortunately, nobody was hurt during the accident.

The investigation has uncovered that the problem of drivers remaining in their vehicle cabs on the ro-ro deck while ferries are on passage is not unique to this route or to P&O.

## SAFETY LESSONS

A ferry's ro-ro deck is a hazardous and potentially life-threatening environment. While a ferry is at sea, the ro-ro decks should be occupied by only trained professional seafarers who are required to undertake safety and security patrols.

Drivers who remain on the vehicle deck of ro-ro ferries pose a danger to themselves, and can cause a delay to the emergency response, particularly in the event of a fire.

Any delay to the activation of fire suppression systems on the vehicle deck due to the need to undertake a muster and headcount of all persons on board could have catastrophic consequences to the whole vessel, its passengers and the environment.

Furthermore, drivers who have remained in their vehicle cabs could be in danger of asphyxiation by the fire, or as a result of the fire suppression systems that may be released by ship's staff.

## ACTIONS TAKEN

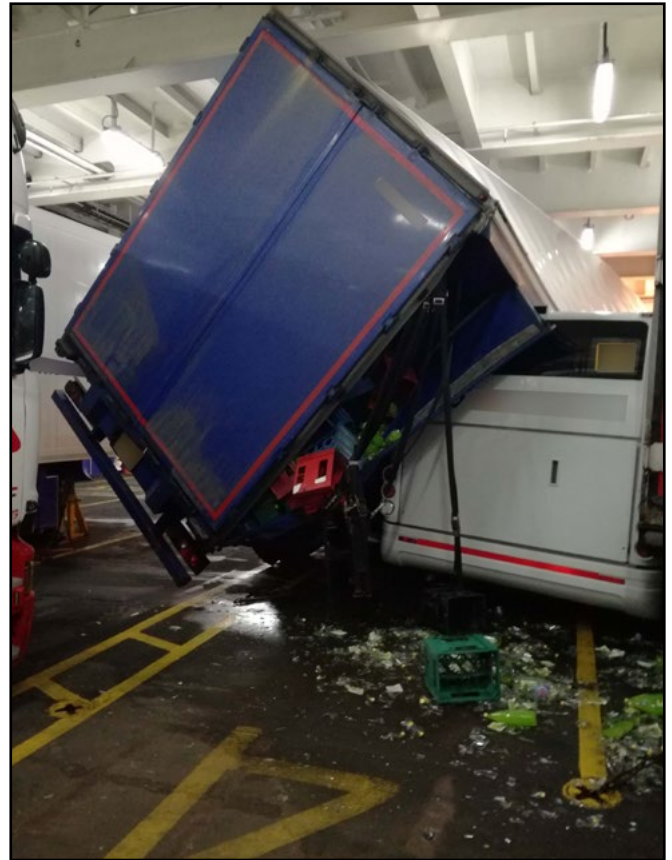
P&O Ferries has contacted ferry operators in the United Kingdom who it considers may be affected by the issue of drivers remaining in vehicle cabs on ro-ro decks. Its aim is to encourage operators to contribute to a discussion forum to collectively eliminate this problem.

**All companies operating ferries to the United Kingdom are strongly encouraged to engage positively with this safety initiative, to work across the industry to develop a cohesive and co-operative approach to resolve this urgent safety issue.**

## RECOMMENDATION

**The Road Haulage Association Ltd** is recommended to:

**S2019/106** Distribute this Safety Bulletin to its members and encourage them to take robust action to improve and assure driver safety by helping ferry operators eliminate the issue of drivers remaining in the cabs of freight vehicles on ro-ro decks.



**Figure 4:** Damaged truck and mini bus

Safety recommendations shall in no case create a presumption of blame or liability