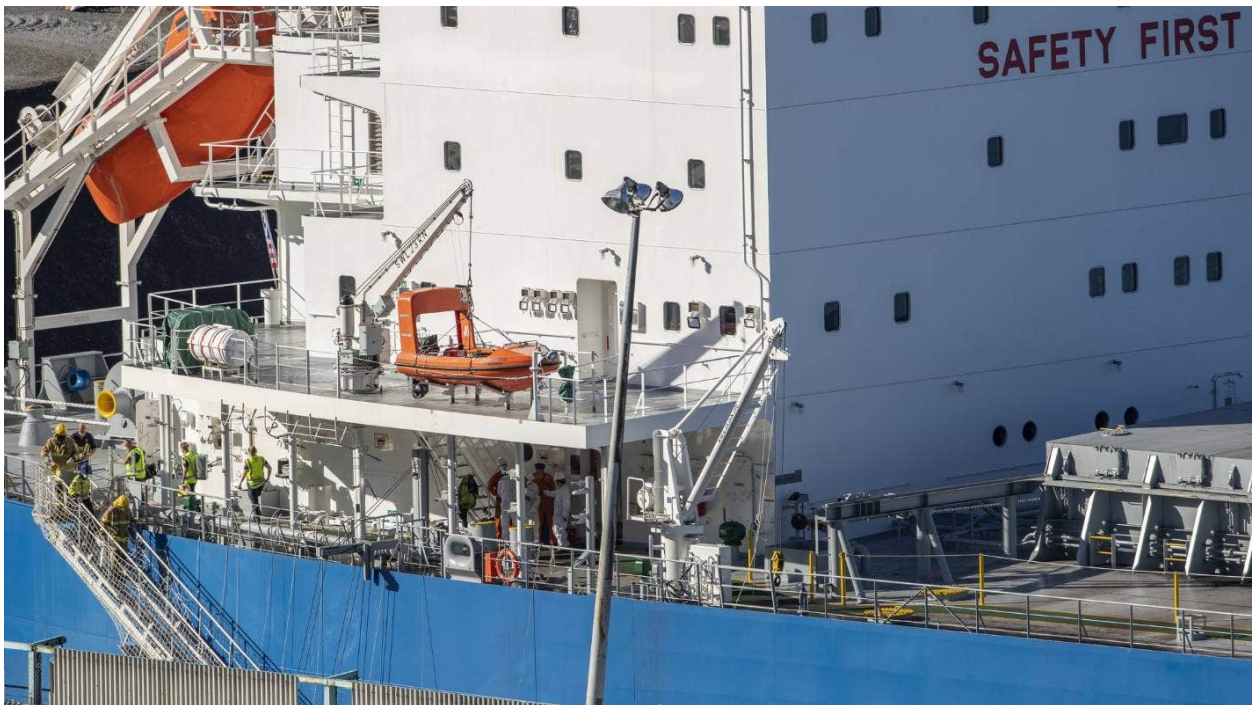


'Urgent need' for inquiry into port safety following second death in a week

Nadine Porter 17:04, Apr 25, 2022



PETER MEECHAM/STUFF

A Lyttelton Port worker has died after being crushed by coal while loading a ship on Monday morning.

The New Zealand Council of Trade Unions says there's an "urgent need" for an inquiry into port safety following two deaths across the country in a week.

A man was crushed by coal while loading the ship ETG Aquarius, berthed at Cashin Quay in Lyttelton, on Monday morning.

Lyttelton Port Company (LPC) acting chief executive Kirstie Gardener confirmed an employee had passed away while the vessel was being loaded with coal for export.

"I wish to express my deep sadness and condolences to both the family of our team member and to the rest of the LPC team. Our focus right now is on supporting our staff and the family of our LPC team member at this tragic time."

Three ambulances and two fire appliances responded to the incident at Cashin Quay in Lyttelton, which was reported shortly before 9.30am.

A *Stuff* photographer said emergency crews were on board ETG Aquarius where coal was being loaded into one of the compartments.

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The ship had arrived at the port on April 22 and had come from China, although it is listed as being of Liberian ownership.

Martime New Zealand is investigating the death and police will conduct enquiries in relation to the death on behalf of the Coroner, who will release their finding in due course.

Maritime Union of New Zealand National Secretary Craig Harrison said the death has hit workers in the industry hard, as it follows so quickly after [the death of a young worker, Atiroa Tuaiti, at the Ports of Auckland six days earlier on 19 April](#).

It was believed Tuaiti fell while working on a container ship and was the fourth death involving the port since 2017.

Harrison said port unions are [calling for national standards in the port industry](#) and would be campaigning hard to improve health and safety in ports.

“These deaths and serious injuries in the port industry should not be happening, and the controls and processes and culture need to be fixed through national standards.”

New Zealand Council of Trade Unions president Richard Wagstaff said Monday’s death was a “tragedy” and served as “further evidence” of the need for an inquiry into port safety in New Zealand.

“Every worker deserves to know that when they go to work in the morning, that they will be coming home safely at the end of the day. Sadly that is currently not the case in this industry, and urgent action is needed.”

Lyttelton Port Company has also suffered previous fatalities with three employees killed in 2014. [The company was subsequently ordered to pay \\$138,000 in fines](#).