

Georgia Ports Authority longshoreman dead after accident at Ocean Terminal

SUV plunges into river at Ocean Terminal during cargo operations

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By [Mary Carr Mayle](#)

A longshoreman died Wednesday morning when the vehicle he was loading onto a ship jumped off the ramp and fell into the Savannah River at Georgia Ports' Ocean Terminal. The accident occurred about 8:30 a.m. as a car carrier vessel was being loaded by members of ILA Local 1414.

Local 1414 President Tommy Stokes III said the accident is still under investigation. He declined to provide the worker's name pending notification of his extended family.

"We don't know yet what happened that caused him to lose control of the car," Stokes said, adding that the victim was a five-year veteran of the docks.

"The car went in upside-down," he said. "One of our longshoremen and a stevedore who was working the ship both went into the water almost immediately, but the airbag had deployed and they couldn't get him out.

"They called for a hammer and knife to break the window and deflate the airbag and were able to get him out and begin CPR. But he was pronounced dead at the hospital." Savannah Fire and Marine 1 responded to the scene on the docks just west of the Talmadge Bridge.

Stokes said he expected to know more about what happened when the investigation was complete.

"Right now, our focus is on coming together to provide the family with prayers and support during this very difficult and tragic time," Stokes said.

Georgia Ports Authority also issued a statement saying "our hearts and prayers go out the family, friends and entire membership of ILA 1414."