



ILA-USMX JOINT SAFETY COMMITTEE

## OSH ALERT 2026-02 [09 February 2026]

### Bunkering During Container Operations

It has been reported that, on 06 February, while conducting container operations aboard **C/V BANKOK EXPRESS** at APM Terminal's Maasvlakte II in Rotterdam, a stack of containers was displaced and fell overboard; onto the Shell-leased liquid natural gas (LNG) bunker tanker **M/V K LOTUS**. Happily, there were no injuries.

In the best of times, taking on bunker fuel is an undertaking loaded with all sorts of hazardous potentials. Bunkering flags must be raised; sources of ignition are plainly prohibited & strictly monitored and physical hazards must be accounted for. In sum, situational awareness is normally (and reasonably) heightened. The risks are all-the-more present when bunkering LNG fuel; for obvious reasons.



**Above:** Containers fallen on the LNG bunker vessel **K LOTUS**

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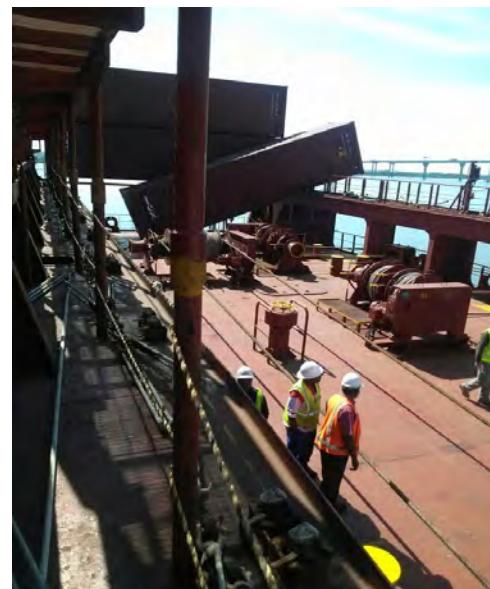
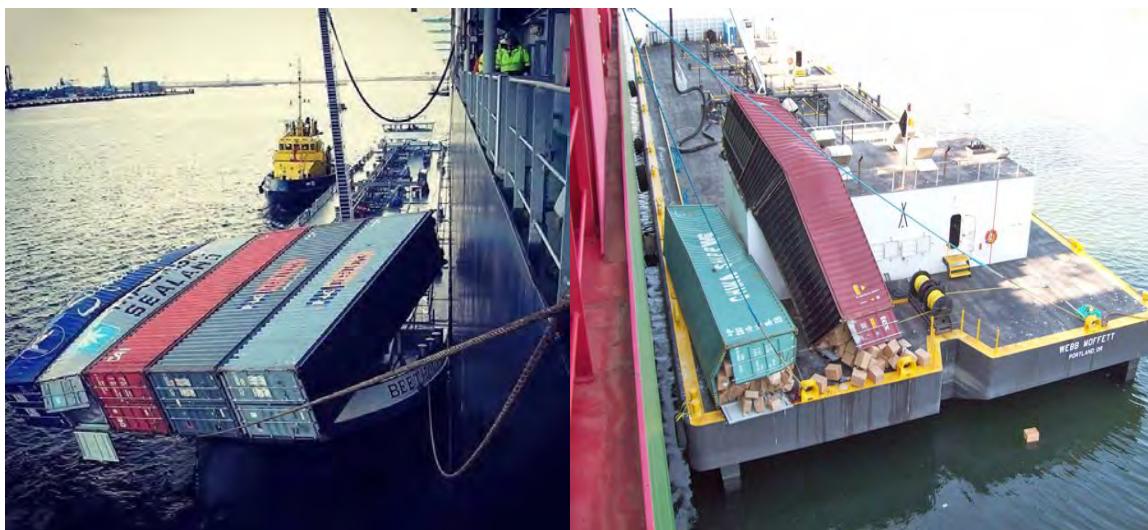
Events like the one that took place at Rotterdam three days ago are not unique.

Files maintained by Blueocean Company reveal that, at a minimum, a dozen such accidents have occurred over the last ten (10) year period. While we have no record of any resultant fires or explosions being produced by those “*containers-overboard-while-bunkering* events”, we do know of personal injuries that have been experienced by bunker vessel personnel as well as substantial physical damage occurring to the bunker vessels themselves.

Industry colleagues on the U.S. West Coast have taken serious account of the potential dangers and have issued guidance to their labor and management constituents. We can provide a link to one example:

<https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:US:3bd2309f-a164-4992-aa93-0615b541370d>

The potential for serious harm and the liabilities that arise prompt the publication of this OSH Alert. It's worth thinking about.



Got a question about this particular subject? Write to the JSC at: [blueocean@optonline.net](mailto:blueocean@optonline.net)