



15 April 2026

Safety Bulletin 04 /2026

Manual handling



What makes breakbulk special?

Manual handling means **transporting or supporting a load by hand or bodily force**. It includes lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving loads.

In modern container terminals many steps of the cargo operation have been automated. Humans are no longer needed to hook up and release containers.

You see the same in oil, chemical and bulk terminals: Little manual handling is required, when cargo is discharged or loaded.

In breakbulk, many cargo items still require a lot of manual handling. Dunnage must be put in place, and lashing and lifting gear connected, all by hand.

On the next page you can read about an incident which has many similarities with other incidents we have experienced, during manual handling.

Automation of operations is hard, when the cargo comes in so many sizes and forms.

Dear all,

G2 Ocean is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment for all personnel involved in our operations. The purpose of our Safety Bulletins is to raise awareness of health & safety risks associated with cargo operations.

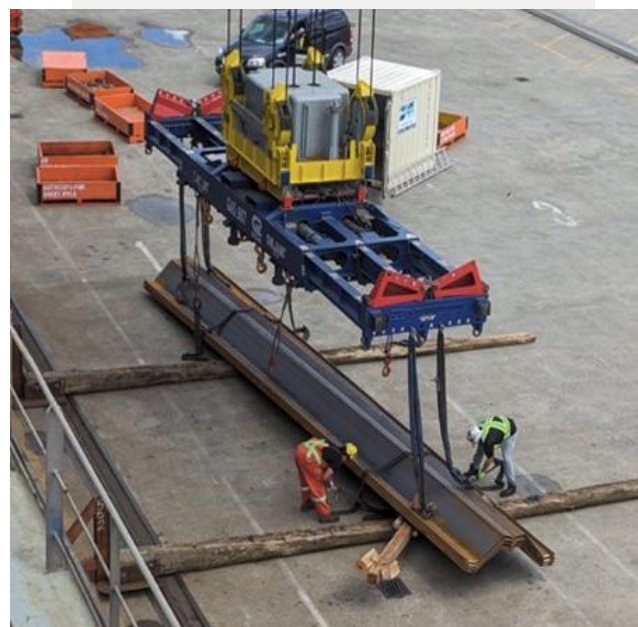
G2 Ocean works with several hundred stevedore companies worldwide. We believe that by seeking and sharing insights across company and country boundaries, we can prevent future incidents together. Descriptions of incidents will always be fully anonymised.

This edition is about manual handling of cargo. This is more common in breakbulk than other shipping segments, and it adds to the safety risk.

If you have any feedback, please email us at:

safety@g2ocean.com

Best regards G2 Ocean Team



Humans, not robots, hook up our cargo.

Small hiccup triggered chain of events:

The lifting chain got stuck below the unit (left). To release it, the intention was to lift the cargo a little and put more wooden dunnage below. Midway through this operation a stevedore was leaning over the cargo, to hand over more dunnage. At this very moment, the chain became unstuck. It hit the stevedore's arm. (Note that the below picture is made shortly after the incident, to illustrate how it happened).



Innovation is one of G2 Ocean's safety behaviours. We expect this behaviour from our own employees, and everyone we work with. It means to be open to new ideas, which can make work safer. Automation will take time and must happen at industry level, but smaller innovations can reduce risk for persons today.

Consequences:



- The above incident resulted in a broken arm.
- Fingers, wrists and arms being crushed or hit by objects, are often the consequence if there is an incident during manual handling.

Lesson learned:



- During manual handling, even the smallest unexpected movement can cause injuries.
- When the operations do not go as planned: Even if it appears to be just a minor thing, stop and think before you continue. In the above case, the signaller and crane operator should not have lifted the unit until all persons were at a safe distance.