

British Tugowners' Association

Annual Safety Seminar

at Southampton

on

6 November 2025

Risks, Nips and Falls...

an MAIB perspective on tug

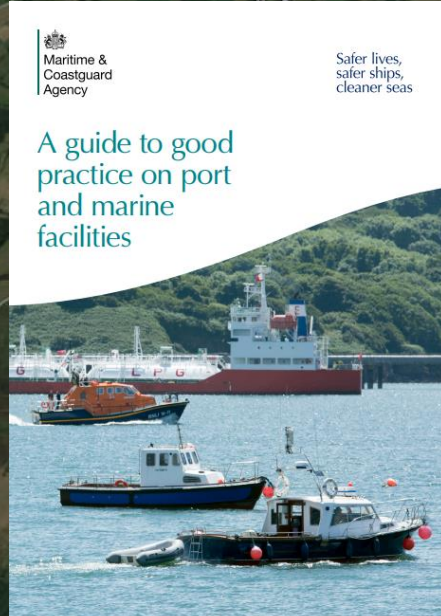
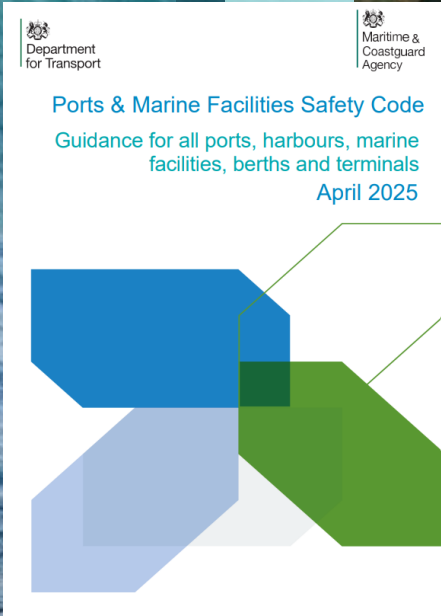
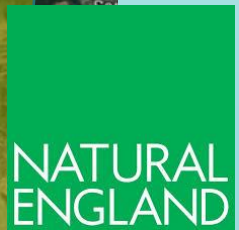
***'Operational Safety in the
Port Ecosystem'***

MAIB
MARINE ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION BRANCH

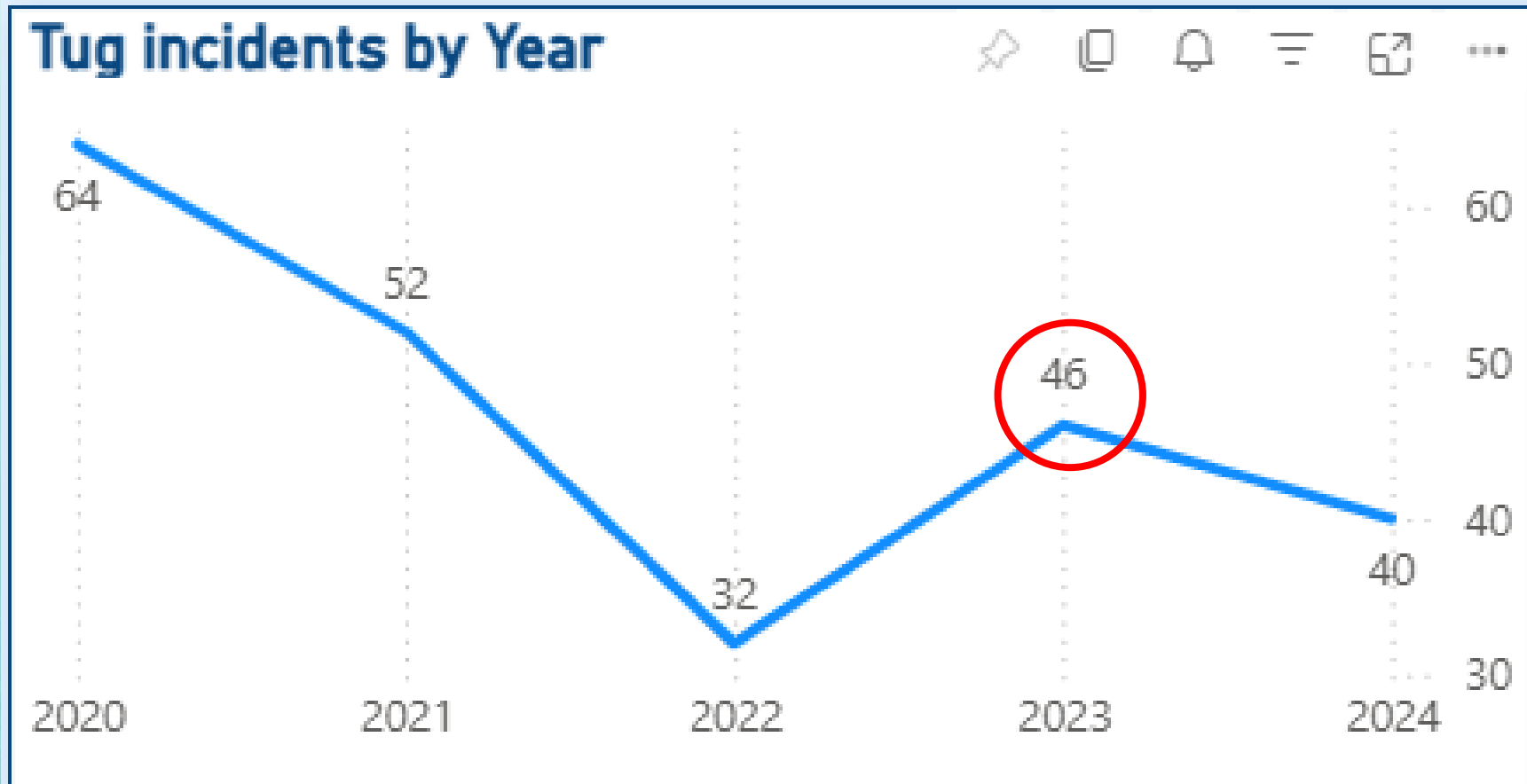
BRITISH TUGOWNERS ASSOCIATION



It's complex!

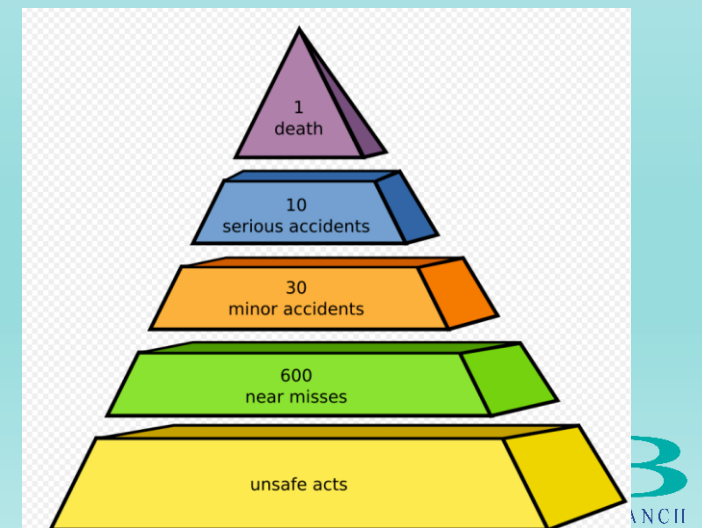
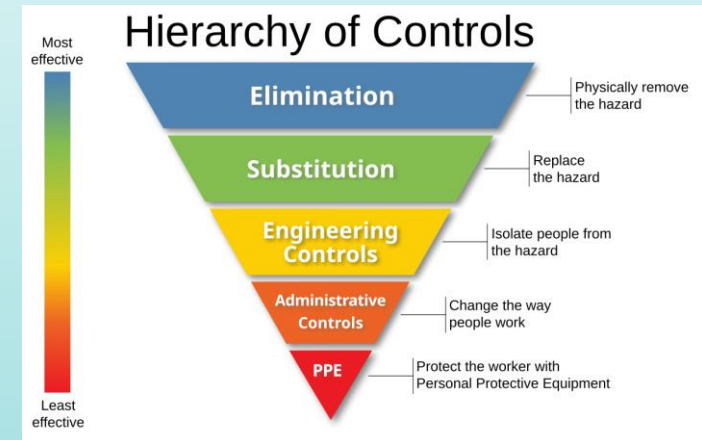


MAIB tug incidents by year



Risks

- Need to be aligned and agreed with other stakeholder, HM, berth owner etc
- Mitigation must be effective
- Monitored using proactive reporting



Most risk are shared

Report on the investigation of the fatal accident
while boarding the tug

Millgarth

at the north oil stage

Tranmere Oil Terminal, Birkenhead, England

on 27 January 2019



VERY SERIOUS MARINE CASUALTY REPORT NO 15/2019 DECEMBER 2019

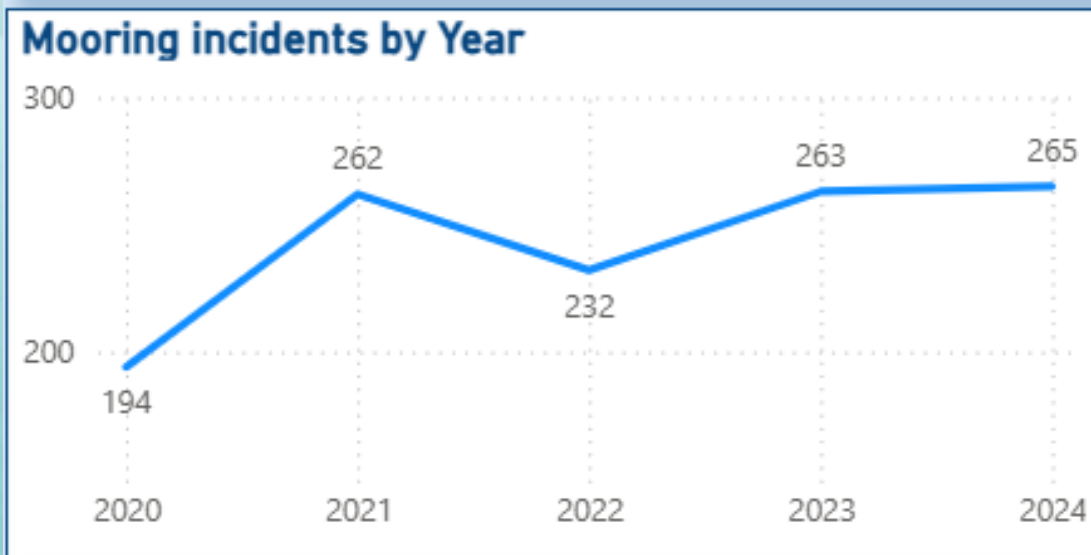
The weather conditions were poor and the chief engineer had tried to board *Millgarth* via an oil stage fender. The investigation concluded the following sequence of events probably occurred:

- The chief engineer fell through the gap between the fender and the oil stage while attempting to board the tug.
- The chief engineer suffered cold water shock followed by cardiac arrest within minutes of falling into the cold water.

It also concluded that:

- Concerns regarding safe access to and from Svitzer tugs at the Tranmere oil terminal had been raised at the safety committee meetings and during company inspections many times prior to this accident.
- Svitzer and Essar Oil UK did not formally identify and evaluate the shared risks associated with access to and from an unmoored tug or discuss how these could be mitigated.

Nips – mooring incidents & Towline failures



Nips – “*Man down*” (safety digest 2/2024)



Figure 1: The tug laying back on the headrope



Figure 2: The headrope having snapped back and sent the deckhand's safety helmet flying

Nips – towline failure



Figure 2: Svitzer Mercurius' starboard towline connected to CMA CGM Marco Polo prior to failure

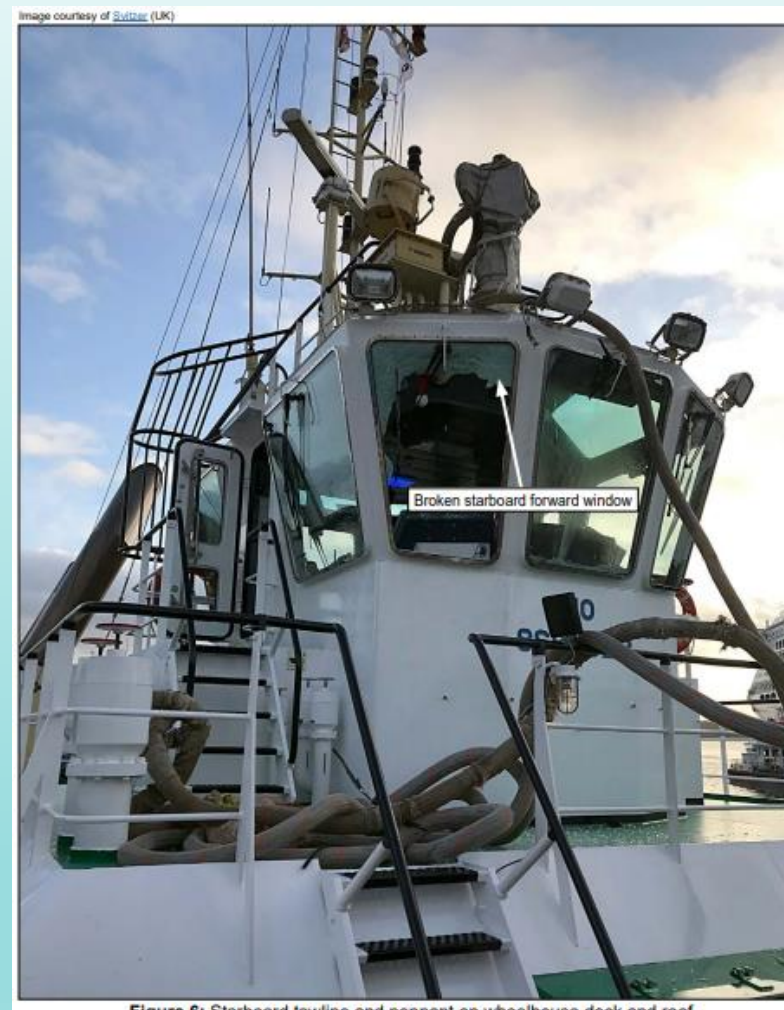
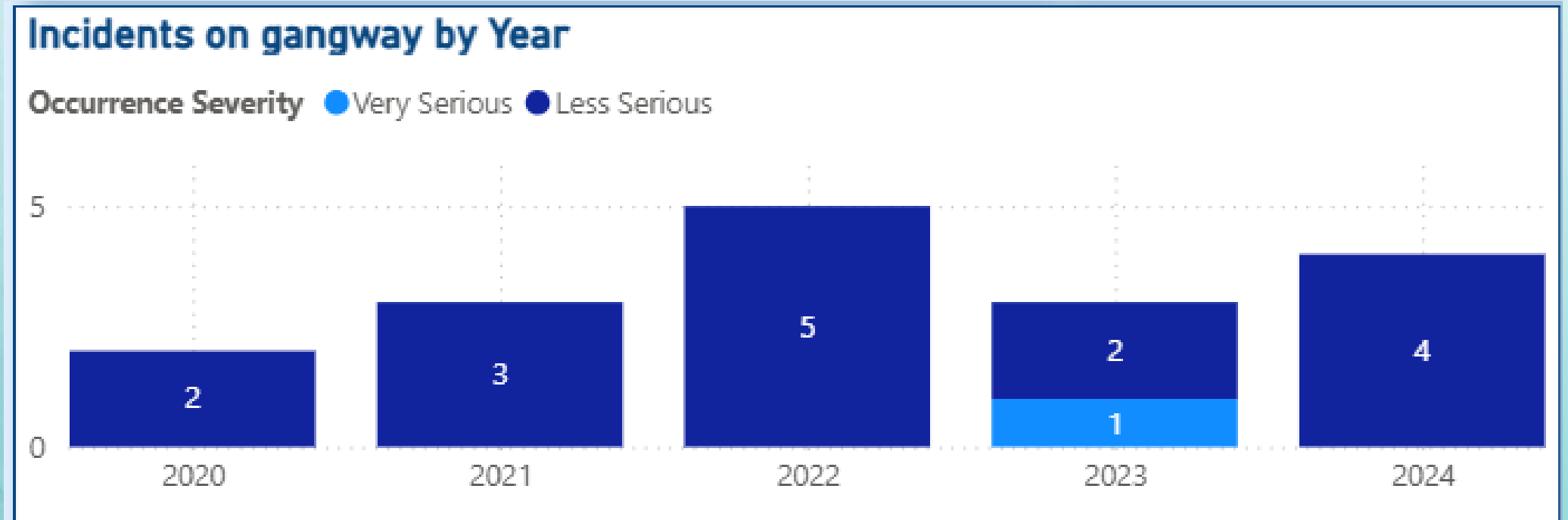


Figure 6: Starboard towline and pennant on wheelhouse deck and roof

Falls – gangway incidents



Falls – Pelican of London



Risks, Nips and Falls – summary

- Align risks assessments with other stakeholders
- Learn from near misses and less serious accidents
- Keep your procedures simple. Train your people to follow them and ensure they do