

The Significant Implications of the Dali Bridge Accident Have Only Just Begun



By [Dan Bookham](#) for [WorkBoat Magazine](#)

As I sit down to write this, I'm still shaking off the jet lag from a week of meetings at Lloyd's of London. Lloyd's was buzzing with a range of issues: the pending North Atlantic hurricane season, tensions in the South China Sea, the potential for increased interference with shipping off Iran, and the ongoing conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza and the implications thereof for coverage in the Black- and Red Seas. The number one topic- by a country mile- was the Dali bridge accident and the significant ramifications that are already falling into place following the collision between the 9,971 TEU container ship and Baltimore's Francis Scott Key Bridge.

Anyone with even a rudimentary grasp of how my industry works can guess the first issue: this incident will result in substantial insurance claims. Experts estimate that insurers may face claims of up to \$3 billion. This figure is double the largest-ever protection & indemnity (P&I – liability relating to vessels) claim to date, which was the \$1.5 billion collective

loss from the 2012 Costa Concordia disaster. One excess P&I underwriter I met with put the potential loss in context by pointing out \$3 billion would wipe out 20 years of underwriting profit across Lloyd's.

Another big topic was the complex insurance structure around this incident. The marine insurance sector operates with a complex and layered structure of insurance and reinsurance designed to minimize, transfer, and offset financial risk. While it's too early to definitively say whether this structure will be breached, the Dali incident has raised concerns about its limits.

Something else that cannot be ignored is the incident's location and our well-deserved reputation for aggressive and expensive litigation here in the States. The collapse of the bridge, the loss of life, and impact on US East Coast trade and the Port of Baltimore all contribute to the complexity of the situation once it reaches the courts.

Operational impacts and trade disruptions continue also, even with the impressive (and often innovative) efforts underway to clear debris, channels, and terminal backlogs. The collapse of a vital regional transport link will continue to affect trade for some time to come, and as we've seen in recent memory with the Ever Given incident in the Suez Canal and general disruptions caused by COVID a supply chain rupture only exacerbates existing pressures and can have an outsized influence on regional and national economies.

The incident is also prompting a lot of searching questions about ship maintenance, tug assist, and why the bridge wasn't better protected. These are broader than Baltimore. I don't pretend to have any of the answers (my armchair NTSB investigator badge never being issued) but I do know that any

incident causes underwriters to break out the microscopes and examine impacted industries and sectors in fine detail.

In summary, the Dali bridge accident poses challenges to the marine insurance system, and its impact will reverberate for many years. And in what won't be a surprise to anyone, marine insurance rates are likely to increase as a result.

Why Every Business, in Every Industry, Needs Cyber Coverage



By [Chris Richmond](#)

For [WorkBoat Magazine](#)

Today's marine industry relies on computers, smart phones and the Internet to operate and is just as vulnerable as any other industry for cyber attacks. An attack can have a significant impact on your employees, your customers, your reputation and can bring you serious financial loss. A cyber liability policy can provide risk management services useful to you before, during and after a data breach.

There are two important types of cyber liability to know about: First party and third party.

A first party cyber liability occurs when your own data is stolen. This can include your own employees' personal information or information about your customers. A cyber liability policy will provide credit monitoring services to assist the affected individuals which could help minimize the risk of identity theft. Included in the category of first party cyber liability are:

- **Funds Transfer Fraud** is an intentional, unauthorized instruction transmitted via email to a financial institution to transfer funds. If your computer system is compromised, a hacker can have access to your banking information and initiate fraudulent electronic wire transfers.
- **Lost Business Income** due to cyber theft, (a hack or data breach), is not covered unless cyber coverage is in place. Your regular business insurance policy covers you for things like fire, theft and wind, but not anything cyber-related.

Third party liability coverage can provide protection for damage caused by your business to third parties due to a hack. This could be confidential client information that you store in your system. Coverage included in this category are:

- **Breach of Privacy:** A client's personally identifiable information has been accessed by an unauthorized party.
- **Misuse of Personal Data:** Personal data is stolen or misused and they suffer financial damages.
- **Transmission of Malicious Content:** Failure to stop the transmission of virus, malware or other malicious content.

Computers, smart phones and the Internet are as important as any other business tool. They also leave you vulnerable to losses. It is very easy to sit back and say your facility is too small and assume no one would ever want your data and think a hack

could never happen to you. But since that is exactly what the hackers want you to say, best to consider adding cyber coverage to your insurance policy. Have a talk with your agent and learn more about this important coverage.

Tracking Near Misses and Building a No-Blame Culture of Safety



Dan
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By Dan Bookham for [WorkBoat Magazine](#)

An accident near miss, also referred to as a close call, or near accident, is an event that happens in a shipyard or on board that has the potential to cause injury or damage, but luckily doesn't. Imagine someone almost getting hit by a swinging crane hook – that would be a near miss. By recognizing and recording these close calls, shipyards and vessel operators can learn from them and prevent future accidents.

The best in the business track accident near misses for a very

important reason: Prevention. Near misses are warnings, pure and simple. By tracking these close calls, you can identify weaknesses in safety protocols before an accident happens. These brushes with disaster reveal root causes. Was it a faulty procedure? A communication breakdown? Uneven training? By understanding the why, you can take corrective actions to prevent similar situations from happening again. Talking openly about near misses is also a feature of a proactive safety culture. This can lead to a more vigilant workforce and a safer work environment overall.

Employers in shipyards and on vessels (and any workplace, really) can encourage near miss reporting through a two-pronged approach: Fostering a culture of safety and making the reporting process itself convenient and positive. This takes leadership commitment to prioritizing safety and being visibly involved in safety initiatives, as well as a willingness to address concerns.

Making the most of near misses also requires a no-blame environment. Employees should feel comfortable reporting near misses without fear of punishment or being seen as incompetent. Emphasize that near misses are valuable information for improvement, not opportunities to assign blame. Recognize and appreciate employees who report near misses. This can be done through public praise, rewards programs (avoiding rewards based on quantity of reports), or simply by expressing gratitude. Encourage open communication about safety by regularly discussing safety procedures, hazards and near misses in safety meetings or training sessions.

Provide an easy-to-use reporting system, whether it's paper forms, a mobile app, or an online portal to allow for ease of reporting and different styles of communication. Make sure it's accessible both during and outside work hours for better recall

of events. Offer options for anonymous reporting if employees prefer it. This can help those who are still hesitant to come forward as you build your safety culture. Minimize the amount of information required to report a near miss while still capturing the necessary details. Finally, be sure to communicate the results of near-miss investigations and the corrective actions taken and display gratitude for the heads up. This shows employees that their reports are valued and acted upon, encouraging future participation.

By combining these approaches, employers can create a safe space for employees to report near misses, ultimately leading to a safer work environment for everyone in the shipyard or on board. In essence, tracking near misses is like catching a fire before it engulfs the whole building. It's a proactive approach to safety that can save lives and prevent costly accidents.

DOL Issues Independent Contractor Final Rule

In early January 2024, the U.S. Department of Labor released a final rule, effective March 11, revising the agency's guidance on how to analyze who is an employee or independent contractor under the Fair Labor Standards Act. This new rule restores the multifactor, totality-of-the-circumstances when determining whether a worker is an employee or independent contractor under the FLSA. We have a PDF offering you more details, including a description of the 2021 rule and the new rule issued in 2024.

The final rule analyzes all six economic realities test factors

without assigning a predetermined weight to a particular factor.
[Click here for the PDF.](#)

[And here is a link to the Maine Workers' Compensation Board web page – with additional resources and an FAQ page.](#)

Mental Health: An Area of Focus in Loss Prevention and Workers Comp



Dan Bookham

By [Dan Bookham](#) for [WorkBoat Magazine](#)

We are hearing more and more about mental health in all aspects of daily life these days, and while this new openness about a once taboo subject is to be welcomed it can still cause squeamishness for employers and concerns about intrusion and privacy that a cut or a burn may not. Even so, it is an important enough risk factor for workplace injuries and vessel & yard accidents that it behooves all of us to pay attention to

it.

First, the why. Mental health is a workplace safety issue because if issues aren't recognized or challenges aren't addressed, it can lead to a number of negative consequences. Mental health problems can impair an employee's ability to focus, concentrate and make sound decisions. This can lead to terrible outcomes, both for the employee and for others. Mental health problems can result in an increase in injuries and accidents, decreased productivity, absenteeism and turnover. This can cost employers a significant amount of money. In addition, mental health problems can lead to decreased morale and increased stress levels. This can create a negative work environment, which is not conducive to safety. All of these are drivers of stress on people and systems, and in turn these increase a company's risk exposure.

There are several things employers can do to address mental health in the workplace. By taking the following steps, employers can help to create a safe and healthy workplace for all employees.

- Provide proactive mental health awareness training to employees. This training can help employees understand mental health issues and how to identify and support someone who may be struggling. Your workers comp/P&I insurer will likely have resources they can refer you to, as will occupational health clinics and local health care providers.
- Create a culture of open communication about mental health. This means encouraging employees to talk about their mental health and to seek help if they need it. The military are real leaders in this area and offer proven, concrete examples of functioning programs for populations where talking about feelings and mental health may not be

a default setting.

- Offer mental health resources to employees. This could include providing access to mental health professionals, offering on-site counseling or providing financial assistance for mental health treatment.
- Promote healthy work-life balance. This means encouraging employees to take breaks, to get enough sleep and to have a life outside of work. Remind your people that toughness is not always analogous to pushing yourself to a breaking point.
- Address workplace stressors. This could include identifying and reducing sources of stress, such as unrealistic deadlines, heavy workloads or bullying.

By taking these steps, employers can reduce the risk of mental health issues driving injuries and accidents, improve quality of life for their people, reduce insurance claims and help to create a safe and healthy workplace for all employees.

Welcome, Sam Grinnell



Sam Grinnell of Lincolnville has joined Allen Insurance and Financial as an account manager in the company's business insurance division.

Grinnell is a graduate of Colby-Sawyer College and before starting his insurance career as an employee-owner at Allen, he has worked as a carpenter, home inspector and aquatics director at the Penobscot Bay YMCA in Rockport.

Said Grinnell: "I like that I can use my experience to provide a critical service to our customers. Having worked for myself, I understand what goes into it and navigating risk is a big part of that. I enjoy working with a group of talented and thoughtful and caring team members, it makes every day more fun and encourages me to be the best I can."

Grinnell will be based at Allen's office on Elm Street in Camden.

Loss Control Visits: Taking a Proactive and Collaborative Approach



By [Dan Bookham](#) for December 2022 [WorkBoat](#) Magazine

Hang around vessels, shipyards, terminals and insurance long enough and you are bound to become familiar with the seemingly strange ritual of the loss control visit. The frequency of the visits depends on the individual insurance company but invariably at some point risk engineers will show up to visit clad in high viz and hard hat, usually clutching a camera (and sometimes a clipboard) to inspect your boat or facility for potential hazards and issues. Sometimes they bring donuts. They also always issue a report and list “recommendations” (read requirements, lest you lose your insurance), which, unlike the Krispy Kremes, can often feel hard to digest.

It doesn't have to be that way, however. By taking a proactive approach to risk management and drawing on the resources of your insurance company (resources your premium payments fund), those loss control visits can feel less like a visit by a drill instructor looking for an unmade bed and more like a collaboration with safety specialists who can both save you money and ensure your people head home each day or after each trip with the same number of digits and limbs they had when they came in.

In preparing for a loss control visit, I highly recommend

working with your insurance agent to undertake a preliminary walk-through to see if you both can spot any easy fixes or potential trouble spots (a frayed cord on a tool for example, or sloppy housekeeping in a workshop). Having your own punch list of planned corrections and improvements will minimize any surprises and make it easier to budget for the fixes. When the loss control team visits, rather than just relying on the written report, be sure to ask them to flag issues in a post walk-through meeting so you can discuss them while memories are fresh.

When the report comes in, be prepared to respond with a timeline to address the elements they raise. I've often found that draconian demands to make immediate fixes soften if you demonstrate a willingness to work on trouble spots at a reasonable (and often more affordable) pace. Proactively use the tools insurers provide, both online and in person, to make the most of your premium dollars and improve the safety and risk profile of your business.

Not only does a proactive and collaborative approach to loss control make the workday safer for your people, your customers and their property, your passengers, and your own stuff, it also can result in lower lifetime insurance costs as fewer claims and a proactive approach to safety and risk make you an attractive customer for insurers to woo.

When it Comes to Claim

Reporting, Don't Hesitate



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By Chris Richmond
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You have heard it before but it bears repeating: If something occurs that you think might be a claim let your agent know sooner rather than later. If a passenger or crew member is injured, report it, even if they say they are fine and do not need medical attention at the time.

The time to record information pertaining to any sort of occurrence is immediately after it happens. This is when everything is still fresh in your mind and you can accurately record the events that happened. Who was injured? Where did it happen? What were they doing at the time? It is much easier to obtain this information at the time of the event rather than try to track it down six months later when you receive a letter from an attorney. By letting your agent know what happened, they in turn can report the claim to the insurance company. There is no harm in sending something in for

reporting purposes only. Adjusters would much rather have this information sooner than later – even if the eventual medical bill is less than your deductible.

We had a passenger vessel operator contact us recently to report a claim. A passenger had fallen while disembarking from a tender while on a shore trip. The captain had offered medical assistance off the boat at a local clinic but the passenger had refused, stating that they were fine and wanted to continue on with the trip. The cruise continued and the passenger enjoyed the remainder of the trip with no complaint. Fourteen months later, the owner of the vessel receives a notice from an attorney looking for payment of medical bills as well as for pain and suffering.

Another client had a similar situation but with a crew member. The individual injured her back while on board. The insured reported the occurrence and the crew member received medical treatment for her injury. Eighteen months later the insured was issued a notice of summons from the crew member's attorney looking for pain and suffering. The adjustor was able to reopen the claim and review the file with all the pertinent notes from the time of the claim.

You should never feel that you can't report something to your insurance agent. Unsafe areas of operations can be determined on board and corrected. This can help reduce injuries and ultimately save you money in the long run. By including your agent in the conversation you can help keep your passengers safer and your business more profitable.

Marine Professional Liability Coverage



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By Chris Richmond
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A very long time ago when I was captain of an old wooden sailing vessel, I was bringing the boat in to the harbor to tie up to the dock, something that I had done countless times. Except this time when I put the engine in reverse to stop forward movement the boat went ahead. Quickly losing room in the congested harbor, I tried again to engage reverse propulsion, to no avail. A wooden tour boat tied up ahead of me finally stopped my movement. There was season-ending damage.

While my vessel's Hull and P&I policy took care of the damage claim, the Coast Guard felt that I had been derelict in duties as captain and wanted to conduct an admiralty hearing against my license. I now needed professional liability insurance coverage.

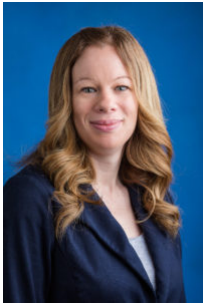
Typically used by attorneys, accountants, consultants and real

estate brokers, professional liability provides coverage against claims made against professionals who have not performed up to the standards of their profession. This type of liability coverage is also available to licensed mariners. Should a claim occur, and the captain be deemed negligent, he or she could be sued in addition to the vessel.

Coverage can include defense costs (both against your license, civil legal defense as well as criminal acts defense), coverage for fines and penalties as well as a daily subsistence allowance. It is important to note that professional equipment, such as a personal GPS or similar navigational device, can also be included. Loss of income can be added to compensate for lost wages due to down time resulting from a claim.

Whether you are driving a 6 pack harbor taxi or a blue water tanker, your livelihood requires you to hold a valid USCG license. When you are involved in a claim involving your license, having professional liability coverage to fall back on can both help alleviate the headache of defending yourself and help take care of some defense costs. Have a talk with your marine insurance agent before you need this kind of protection.

Busy Season is Here: A Quick Insurance Checklist



By [Krissy Campbell](#)

Summer is just here! Restaurants are open, shops are full and traffic is backed up. For local businesses of all sorts, this is good news: Whether you're a contractor taking on new projects, restaurants coming out of hibernation, shops stocking your shelves or hotels & motels bringing on seasonal staff. If you're one of the many businesses with seasonal influxes, let's make sure all that prep work you've done is covered as it should be. Be sure to call your insurance agent about:

- New employees
- Increases in current payroll
- Increase in sales and/or inventory
- New equipment
- New vehicles or drivers
- Seasonal operations
- New operations or projects
- Newly rented or leased locations
- New construction or acquisitions