Commercial Fishing Injury Prevention Ideas Facebook Poll Results

In summer 2017, we polled commercial fishermen through Oregon Sea Grant’s Facebook. We asked about anti-slip mats, banger bars, and safety chains. These three ideas came from talking with fishermen about what might prevent injuries. Here are the poll results.

Post #1 Anti-Fatigue/Slip Mats

Have you used anti-fatigue/slip mats on a commercial fishing vessel?
31 fishermen responded, 23 said YES.

Do anti-fatigue/slip mats work? Do they prevent injuries? Any stories to share?
28 fishermen commented, 19 believed they work well.

Fishermen Comments:
- Helps with fatigue on knees and feet.
- Protects the fiberglass deck from crab pots.
- Footing is much more secure.
- Mat needs to be fitted to the deck properly.
- Important to consider design features, including thickness, flexibility, porosity, and surface texture for ease of cleaning and comfort.

Post #2 Banger Bars

Have you ever used a “banger bar” in the commercial Dungeness crab fishery?
60 fishermen responded, 37 said YES

If yes, did you like using it? Did you feel it improved crew safety?
43 fishermen commented, 26 believed they helped dump pots, 17 thought they improved safety.

Fishermen Comments:
- Makes the dumping of pot fast and effective.
- Easier on the back when flipping pots over.
- Prevents pot from getting away.
- Make bar removable for stacking gear.
- Less manhandling the pot, which helps with fatigue.
- Fisherman slipping is less likely while flipping pot.
- Protects the bater when he is measuring crab.
- Banger bars must be customized to each boat’s pot sizes and dumb box.
- Fishermen should not put their hands on the banger bar to avoid smashed fingers.

Post #3 Safety Chains

Have you worked on a commercial fishing vessel that used a safety chain to secure the block to the vessel?
6 fishermen responded, 4 said YES.

Tell us more about the way the crab block was secured to the vessel.
6 fishermen commented.

Fishermen Comments:
- Couple of chain links secured by shackles to add a second connection between crab block and davit.
- Two connection points is much better at minimizing the swing and movement of the block due to swell action and pulling on gear.
- “Less random movement of the block means a safer working environment for crew that is working in close proximity to the block.”

For more information and resources for commercial fishing safety, visit: FLIPPresources.org