

Marine Safety Forum – Safety Flash 08/32

Issued: 13th October 2008

Subject: Titan Release Gear

There has been an incident on an offshore support vessel concerning the diaphragm / hydrostatic release unit on the Daughter Craft that stops the release handle being accidentally activated whilst the craft is clear of the water during launch and recovery. See Diagram 1.

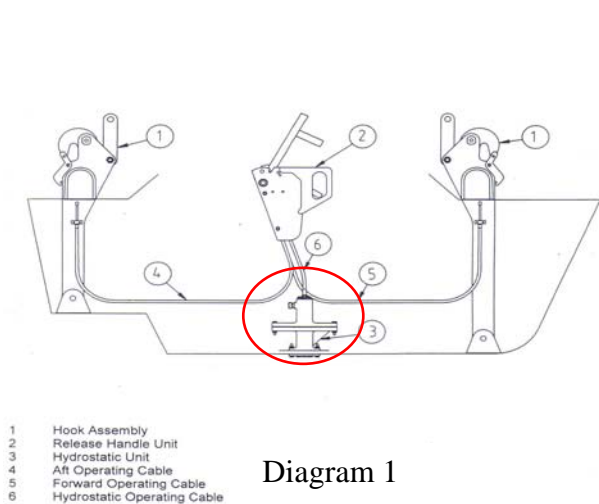


Diagram 1

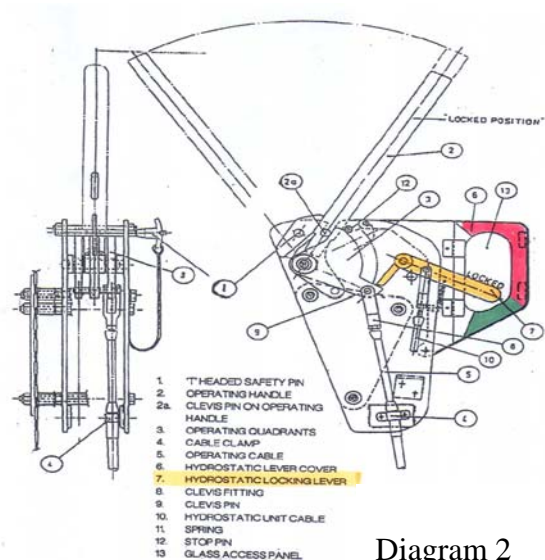


Diagram 2

The incident happened when a daughter craft was being launched and when the boat was circa 4 feet from the water. As the boat was being lowered the hooks released and the boat fell. A crewmember was injured as a result. After further inspection it was found that the Hydrostatic locking lever was open, (see diagram 2) causing the boat to release prematurely before it entered the water. As a result of a detailed investigation it can only be assumed that this was caused by the 'T' headed safety pin being taken out before launching and possibly the operating handle being lifted, leaving the hydrostatic release system as the only fail safe. If the hydrostatic locking lever had been in the 'closed' position as it should during launch and recovery, then the boat would have only released when it entered the water even with the pin removed and the handle lifted.

Whenever using this system, it must be remembered that the safety pin and the release lever MUST be left in place until the boat is in the water and the weight is off the falls. A visual check should also be carried out to ascertain the position of the Hydrostatic locking lever and to ensure that it is in the 'Locked' position.