Marine Safety Forum – Safety Flash 08-12

Issued: 4th March 2008

Subject: Seaman Injured in Crane Pennant Wire Incident

A vessel was working cargo in the early afternoon. Lighting conditions were good and the weather conditions were within acceptable limits – SSW at 30 knots with 3.0m significant wave height. The only available space for backload was at the stern of the deck.

Two ABs were in the process of disconnecting a 20-foot half height basket, AB1 holding the crane pennant and AB2 disconnecting the hook. As the stern of the ship fell into the trough of a wave, AB1 suddenly found himself hoisted into the air 2-3 feet, at which point he let go and landed on the deck on his feet. He felt a slight twinge to his back but continued working. When the ship left the platform, he informed the bridge of the incident but continued working until the end of his shift.

The following morning, the AB found that his back had stiffened up such that he was no longer able to work, and when the vessel returned to port he was signed off for two weeks.

Posed photograph showing typical activities while connecting/disconnecting a container

Lessons Learned

- Though the ABs had concerns about the movement of the hook and pennant wire, they did not call a safety time out.
- The ABs should not have continued to disconnect the pennant if they felt there was insufficient slack.
- If in doubt, 'stop the job' and review.
- Be aware that the stern of a ship has the greatest vertical movement in a seaway.
- A brief tool box talk must be held before every new or routine task to review the hazards.
- When an incident occurs, it must be reported immediately to prevent a recurrence, and early attention may help to mitigate any injury sustained.