

Marine Safety Forum – Safety Flash 08-25

Issued: 16 July 2008

Subject: Loss of Thrusters

Description of the Incident:

The vessel was positioned (on DP) alongside the east side of the installation when the incident occurred. The DP suddenly lost control of all thrusters (they all went zero RPM) and the vessel started to drift off from position. The crane was just about to put down the last back-load when the incident occurred. The crane-driver was told to hoist the back-load lift up again. The mate switched over to manual thruster control and manoeuvred manually away from the platform.

The Master was called up to the bridge and an investigation was started to find out what the reason was for the loss of thruster control on DP. It was found that the inter-switch between MAIN DP controller and JOYSTICK controller had been moved from position MAIN to position JOYSTICK. (See Picture attached.) This was probably caused by the cable connected to the VHF handset.

The switch was moved back to MAIN, and the vessel was set up on DP again before going back alongside to back-load the last lift from the installation.



Corrective Action:

Make sure that all switches and other similar equipment are covered and that safeguards are in place to prevent any incidents as described above. E.g. a Plexiglas cover should be fitted over the inter-switch to prevent this from happening again.