



Marine Safety Forum – Safety Flash 09/19

Issued: 14th June 2009

Subject: Near Miss with Crane Hook

Summary:

Whilst alongside a North Sea installation, a vessel was completing heavy lift backload operations. The weather conditions had been assessed and deemed Ok for the operation to commence and continue. Whilst it was noted that there was a long swell period (Which is common in the North Atlantic), this was well within workable limits and each step was assessed by the use of a dynamic risk assessment and the generic deck cargo work risk assessment. The vessel loaded one 24T lift longitudinally against the stbd bulkhead, followed by one 12T lift. Due to the movement of the vessel, and in discussion with the crane driver, this was loaded transversely against the after bulkhead to prevent movement, unhooked, and secured on deck. As the deck crew (two crewmen) finished securing the cargo, the crane driver requested that the slings – which were still attached to the now secured lift – be returned. Following confirmation, the deck crew unhooked the slings and attached them to the crane hook, which, due to the weight of the slings, had to be lowered to 1 metre from the deck; which is closer than usual. The slings were attached to the crane hook ready for recovery, and, at the same time, the vessel pitched; causing hook's position relative to the deck to lower. The hook made contact with the Injured Party's leg, grazing his shin and ankle. Having got himself clear of the situation, he reported the incident to the Bridge via the Bosun.

Key Lessons:

The vessel was pitching, which caused the stern to drop and rise, and the hook therefore landed and rose relative to the deck. Further, the weight of the lifting equipment produced slower reactions from the crane and less manoeuvrability. The slings were unusually heavy, which meant that the crane had to be lowered closer than usual to the deck and required two crewmembers to lift. Because the standard number of crew on deck is two, this meant that there was not a 'standby' to watch the crane hook as both were actively engaged. Once it became clear that the job had changed out of the ordinary, it should have been stopped and reassessed.

Actions Taken:

- During normal cargo operations one man operates the crane hook and one provides back up and protects the hook handler. If the operation requires **both** personnel to carry out a task, thereby removing the backup, then an additional person shall go on deck to provide the required support including monitoring the headache ball/hook".
- Consider the practicality of safety footwear which provides additional ankle protection against impact.

Actions to be Taken Onboard:

- Whenever the circumstances of an operation changes from the expected, or is outwith the 'ordinary', the job shall be stopped and reassessed, with additional control measures put into place where necessary.