

# Safety Alert

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**Subject: Mooring Line Dragged Overboard During Port Approach**

## What Happened / Narrative

As part of the pre-port entry preparations the vessels deck crew had laid out the mooring lines on the aft deck and attached the heaving lines to the mooring ropes so that everything was ready for mooring when the vessel arrived at her berth.

As the vessel passed the breakwaters inbound, she encountered backwash swell from the breakwaters which caused the vessel to roll and water to enter the deck areas via the deck scuppers.

The water then started to drain off the vessels deck taking the heaving line overboard with it. As the heaving line was attached to the mooring rope it, in turn, was also partially dragged overboard.

Once inside the port an AB made his way aft and noticed that the mooring line was dragging behind the vessel so immediately informed the bridge. The vessel Master informed the port control, slowed the vessels speed and disengaged the propulsion units aft to reduce the risk of the ropes entering the propellers, the AB's then promptly recovered the mooring rope and heaving line back on deck and the vessel made her way to her berth without further incident.

## Why Did it Happen / Cause

Preparing the mooring lines on deck in this fashion during a vessels approach to port is common practice, the intention being to 'save time' after port entry and allow the AB's to concentrate on assisting the vessel Master by providing him with distances fore & aft while approaching the berth however, 'safety must never be compromised in the interest of speed' and the possibility of the above scenario during an approach in adverse weather had not been fully risk assessed.

## Corrective Actions Taken / Recommendations

After the vessel was securely moored the Master called a TOFS meeting with the AB's to discuss and review the incident, he also submitted a report to the charter and his owners who in turn shared the incident as an 'experience feedback / lesson learned' with the rest of the fleet.

The 'mooring operations' risk assessment was reviewed to include preparing mooring ropes outside the port in adverse weather and the company's port arrival checklist is currently under review to ensure this is also captured in their checklist.

Vessels are encouraged to review their own mooring operations and identify if a similar occurrence could occur.

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