

Safety Alert

Number: 26-14

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Subject: Insufficient Controls During Cargo Securing

What Happened / Narrative

During transit from the supply base to the oil field, heavy seas (7m waves, 40-knot SSE winds) caused about 15 containers to shift roughly 1 meter from port to starboard despite being secured with tightened tugger wires. Additional cargo had been loaded on the port side due to rig requirements and crane positioning offshore.

One refrigerated container sustained a broken electrical cable, resulting in power loss and compromised food cargo. Upon arrival, the vessel maintained clear communication with the crane operator to ensure safe discharge for the deck crew.

Why Did it Happen / Cause

- Vessel heading deviated due to heavy seas from port stern.
- Cargo stowed with tugger wires left air gaps between items, increasing the risk of movement in rough conditions.
- Heavy seas and water on deck amplified shifting forces.
- Uneven cargo distribution driven by operational needs—specifically crane reach, crane position, and rig layout—heightened the likelihood of movement.

Lessons Learned

- Review Cargo Securing Manual, Risk Assessment, and procedures before voyage in heavy weather conditions.
- Position the cargo appropriately to optimize securing for adverse weather conditions.
- Consider additional securing measures (e.g., chains, extra lashings) for high-risk voyages.
- Improve voyage planning with client logistic planners to anticipate and mitigate severe weather impacts.
- Encourage and exercise Stop Work Obligation if safety is compromised during loading or transit.

Photographs / Supporting Information



Ask Yourself and Your Crew:

1. Are company procedures, risk assessments, and securing controls understood and applied at every step of the job?
2. Are hazards and controls being re-assessed when conditions change (e.g., sea state, crane operations, stow plan)?
3. Is Stop Work Obligation understood and used when any doubt exists?

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