



# UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

## **FINDINGS OF CONCERN**

### **MSU Lake Charles**

December 19, 2025  
Lake Charles, LA

Findings of Concern 021-25

## **INCORPORATING WEATHER RISK ASSESSMENTS INTO LIFTBOAT VOYAGE PLANNING**

Purpose. The U.S. Coast Guard issues findings of concern to disseminate information related to unsafe conditions that were identified as causal factors in a casualty and could contribute to future incidents. Findings of concern are intended to educate the public, state, or local agencies about the conditions discovered so they may address the findings with appropriate voluntary actions and highlight existing applicable company policies or state/local regulations.

The Incident. A Coast Guard marine casualty investigation identified an absence of pre-voyage risk assessments and weather monitoring prior to a liftboat getting underway in hazardous weather conditions. The liftboat subsequently ran aground on the western jetty boulder wall of the Calcasieu Ship Channel in Cameron, Louisiana. As a result, the vessel experienced minor hull damage. Fortunately, the grounding did not lead to flooding or injuries.

Contributing Factors and Analysis. The investigation highlighted opportunities to strengthen decision making and oversight practices, particularly regarding the completion of risk assessments during pre-voyage planning. The vessel departed on its voyage during forecasted sea conditions that exceeded the maximum limits specified in the vessel's approved Stability Letter and Operations Manual. Although the managing company provided daily forecasts and weather risk assessment forms intended to support voyage planning, there appeared to be a lack of clarity around the expectation for their mandatory use. Prior to the grounding incident, the master relied on personal experience and professional judgment to evaluate the forecasted conditions and did not complete a formal risk assessment prior to departure. The vessel encountered deteriorating weather and sea conditions during transit, which ultimately contributed to contact with the jetty wall and its subsequent grounding.

Findings of Concern. Coast Guard investigators have identified the following voluntary measures liftboat operators can take to mitigate the risks associated with the contributing factors identified above:

- Establish procedures for frequent weather checks in order to monitor unexpected weather changes prior to departure and while underway.
- Train liftboat masters and mates to conduct risk assessments and evaluate their ability to identify and mitigate hazards encountered during operations, including adverse weather and sea conditions.



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- Require submittal of operational risk assessments to management for review prior to getting underway.
- Conduct periodic audits while vessels are afloat and/or loading cargo in order to evaluate the crew's actions while preparing to get underway and validate that the predeparture condition is aligned with the vessel's Liftboat Operating Manual and Stability Book.

Closing. These findings of concern are provided for informational purposes only and do not relieve any domestic or international safety, operational, or material requirements. For any questions or comments please contact Marine Safety Unit (MSU) Lake Charles Investigations Division by phone at (337) 491-7805 or email at [LakeCharlesIO@uscg.mil](mailto:LakeCharlesIO@uscg.mil).