



# UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

## **MARINE SAFETY ALERT**

### ***Inspections and Compliance Directorate***

October 11, 2022  
Washington D.C.

Safety Alert 10-22

## **MODIFICATIONS TO FISHING VESSEL LIFTING GEAR**

A recent marine casualty resulting in a death and injury on board a commercial fishing vessel serves as a reminder of the dangers associated with modifying lifting gear on fishing vessels. Significant modifications to the main and auxiliary booms of a purse seine fishing vessel contributed to the catastrophic failure of the vessel's mast. Failures of masts, booms, and lift cables have frequently occurred on purse seine vessels resulting in loss of life and severe injuries. Over the years, numerous casualties have occurred onboard a variety of fishing vessel types due to modifications to lifting gear or changes in vessel operations (e.g., new fisheries). Significant alterations or repairs to a vessel's hull, boom, or towing points may adversely affect structural integrity and load bearing limits.



Owners and operators of commercial fishing vessels must ensure that planned structural modifications to increase lifting capacity or that could alter vessel stability are completed under the oversight of a qualified individual such as a professional engineer or naval architect. [Safety Alert 02-12](#) provides additional guidance to prevent overloading lifting gear and [Safety Alert 11-08](#) provides additional guidance to identify and address stability concerns on fishing vessels.

The Coast Guard **strongly recommends** that vessel Owners and Operators (or other relevant stakeholders):

- Know design limits of load bearing structures and winches, hoist, and haul components.
- Conduct a new stability review when a vessel changes operations (e.g., new fisheries) or if significant weight changes are made to the vessel as a result of adding or removing equipment.
- Ensure planned structural modifications are completed under the oversight of a qualified individual (i.e., a professional engineer or naval architect).

- Commercial fishing vessel examiners, marine investigators, and surveyors are encouraged to maintain an acute awareness to these issues and initiate corrective actions, as needed.

This Safety Alert is provided for informational purposes only and does not relieve any domestic or international safety, operational, or material requirement. Developed by Investigators at Sector San Francisco and distributed by the Office of Investigations and Analysis. Questions may be sent to [HQS-SMB-CG-INV@uscg.mil](mailto:HQS-SMB-CG-INV@uscg.mil).