MISLE Incident Investigation Report
For
UPPER CLASS - Injury

On 01Jul2016 13:30:00 EDT

MISLE Activity Number: 5983290
MISLE Case Number: 1033332
INJURY OCCURRING ON THE SMALL PASSENGER VESSEL UPPER CLASS
WHILE CONDUCTING PARASAIL OPERATIONS OFF THE COAST OF
PENSACOLA, FLORIDA ON JULY 01, 2016

ACTION BY THE COMMANDANT

The record and the report of the investigation convened for the subject casualty have been reviewed. The record and the report, including the findings of fact, analysis, conclusions, and recommendations are approved subject to the following comments. This marine casualty investigation is closed.

ACTION ON RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: The latent unsafe condition present throughout the parasail community is where the stern of the vessel meets the aft landing platform of the vessel. The corner known as combing creates a rigid 90 degree angle. There is no requirement to have any padding or protective covering on that edge. In the event the parasailor is brought in too low or if the wind dissipates as the passenger is being winched in, creates the potential to cause serious leg and/or bodily injuries if they come into contact with the combing. It is recommended that the American Society for testing and materials (ASTM) and its’ member agencies consider implementing a requirement that the combing be protected with padding.

Action: I concur with the intent of this recommendation. In January 2012, the Coast Guard requested that stakeholders and WSIA develop voluntary standards for the parasailing industry using the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) consensus standards process. A subcommittee was formally established in the fall of 2012, and the first ASTM standards were published in April 2013.

The ASTM “Standard Practices for Parasailing” continue to be reviewed and have undergone multiple revisions over the past nine years, the most recent version being F3099-19. The parasail industry has taken extensive action towards improving operational safety. Key elements of the standard are: Weather Monitoring and Limits, Equipment, Towline Care, Operations, Crew Requirements, Emergency Procedures, and Patron Responsibility. The Coast Guard continues to monitor the industry’s implementation of the ASTM standards and evaluate their effectiveness. This is completed through Coast Guard presence at annual parasailing conferences and
engagement with the Water Sports Industry Association (WSIA) and by periodically providing casualty data to measure ASTM standard effectiveness.

Since this casualty in 2016, the Coast Guard has issued multiple Safety Alerts and Marine Safety Information Bulletins (MSIBs) to the public, which are specific to the parasailing industry. Of particular note, in 2018, 12-18 Safety Alert 'Hazards of Parasail and Watersport Passenger Transfers' was published and addresses the Coast Guard’s recommendation to waterport vessel owners and operators to develop written guidance for all aspects of the underway transfer of passengers during transfers.

The closure of this case will allow the Coast Guard to share it and this third party safety recommendation with our parasailing industry partners to further strengthen safety measures within the parasailing industry.

This report, along with similar parasailing cases, will be posted and available to the public on the DCO website here:


J. D. NEUBAUER
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard
Acting Director of Inspections and Compliance
I. INCIDENT INVESTIGATION – GENERAL INFORMATION

On 01 July 2016 at approximately 1230 the UPPER CLASS (O.N.1209741) was conducting parasail operations off the coast of Pensacola, Florida. The Captain and Deckhand advised the patrons of general safety, lifejackets, man overboard and fire procedures. There was no mention of launch or recovery instructions. Two sets of patrons had taken their turns and the third couple was going up in the parasail chute. The two prior runs were uneventful with no injuries or incidents. The wind in the area during that day was calm and out of the NNW at 3.5mph at 12:15.

The third set of patrons took their ride; on the way down the Captain of the UPPER CLASS “dipped” the couple. “Dipping” the passenger’s requires them to be pulled no further away than 150 from the vessel then the patron’s lower body is immersed in the water for a few seconds then ascend back over the water. Once the “dip” was done they continued to pull the couple in. The couple was approximately 10’ from the boat when the winds suddenly stopped and the couple dropped almost parallel with the stern of the vessel. The deck hand continued to reel in the parachute in and the Captain was telling the couple to lift their legs up.

The winch pulled them into the vessel but the female passenger wasn't able to get her legs lifted up in time and sustained lacerations to both shins. The Male was bruised down his left leg and pelvis but didn’t require medical treatment beyond first aid. The injured female was transported to the shore for additional medical treatment. Once on the shore she was transported to urgent care and was treated with stitches for her injuries.

As a result of its investigation, the Coast Guard has determined that the initiating event for this casualty was injuries sustained during the recovery of the passengers and parachute. The causal factors that contributed to this casualty include: (1) Pre-existing medical condition of one of the injured passenger’s and the inability to lift her legs in time, (2) the lack of wind keeping the parachute inflated and (3) the vessel’s hard combing on the stern.

**Personnel Casualty Summary**

- Total Missing = 0
- Total Dead = 0
- Total Injured = 1
- Total At Risk, Not Injured = 1
- Total People At Risk = 2

**Vessel(s) Status Summary**

- Actual Total Loss = 0
- Total Constructive Loss Salvaged = 0
- Total Constructive Loss Unsalvaged = 0
- Damaged = 0
- Undamaged = 1

**Property Damage Summary**

- Vessel(s) = $ 0
- Cargo = $ 0
- Facility(s) = $ 0
- Other = $ 0

* Includes estimates
II. LOCATIONS
Description | Latitude | Longitude
--- | --- | ---
Gulf of Mexico | 30°19.6 N | 087°03.4 W

III. INVOLVED PERSONNEL
Name: [Redacted]
Team Lead: Yes
Point Of Contact: Yes
Role: Investigating Officer - Field Investigation
Status: Assigned
Department Id: 007371
Type/Rank: Warrant - Warrant Officer (W3)
Agency Type/Agency: Federal - DHS/Federal - DHS
Source Id/Source: [Redacted]/Direct Access Personnel
Comments:

IV. INVOLVED TEAM

V. INVOLVED SUBJECTS
Involved Vessels
Name: UPPER CLASS
Flag: UNITED STATES
Primary VIN: 1209741
Call Sign: WDH4891
Damage Status: Undamaged
Role: Involved in a Marine Casualty
Classification, Type, Subtype: Passenger Ship, Parasailing Vessel, General (More Than 6)
Gross Tonnage: 13
Net Tonnage: 10
Dead Wt. Tonnage: 31.0
Length: ORANGE BEACH
Keel Laid Date: 27Mar2008
Delivery Date: CLERMONT, New Jersey, UNITED STATES
Place of Construction: Builder Name:
Propulsion Type: Diesel Outdrive
Ahead HP: 330
Master: [Redacted]
Classification Society: Owner: Chute em up, [Redacted]
Operator: [Redacted]
Inspection Subchapter: T
Current Certificate of Inspection: Issued On: 05Feb2015 by Sector Mobile

Involved Persons
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status:</th>
<th>Role:</th>
<th>Gender:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At Risk, Not Injured</td>
<td>Witness</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MISLE Incident Investigation Report

Age: 
SSN: 
Birth Date: 
Email Address: 
Phone Number (Home): 
Address (Home/Primary Residence): 

Comments: 

Status: 
Role: 
Gender: 
Age: 
SSN: 
Birth Date: 
Email Address: 
Phone Number: 
Address (Home/Primary Residence): 

Comments: 

Status: 
Role: 
Gender: 
Age: 
SSN: 
Birth Date: 
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Comments: 

Status: 
Role: 
Gender: 
Age: 
SSN: 
Birth Date: 
Email Address: 
Phone Number (Home): 
Address (Home/Primary Residence):
Drug and Alcohol Testing. The following people have been determined by the Coast Guard, Law Enforcement Personnel, and/or the Marine Employer to have been directly involved in a Serious Marine Incident as defined in 46 CFR 4.03-2:

- Subject of Investigation
- Subject of Investigation

Involved Organizations
- Chute em up
- Other

Address (Home/Primary Residence):
- UNITED STATES
Involved Facilities: None

**Involved Waterways**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GULF OF MEXICO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Role: Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description: Gulf of Mexico</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Involved Other Subjects: None

## VI. EVIDENCE

**Control Number:** 5983290 - MISLE - 0  
**Description:** MISLE Notification #751703 for a report of an incident received by Telephone call to Coast Guard

**Evidence Type:** Misle Notification  
**Collection Information**

- Date/Time: 25Aug2016 16:15:22 EDT  
- Location: Sector Mobile; U. S. Coast Guard

**Attachments**

cg-2692 back; CG-2692-Rpt of Marine, Comm Dive, or OCS Casualty; 30Aug2016 10:59:01 EDT; No

cg-2692; CG-2692-Rpt of Marine, Comm Dive, or OCS Casualty; 30Aug2016 10:58:39 EDT; No

**Control Number:** 5983290-001-EJK  
**Description:** CG-2692  
**Evidence Type:** Standard

**Collection Information**

- Date/Time: 11Jul2016 15:53:00 EDT  
- Location: Sector Mobile; U. S. Coast Guard

**Attachments**

cg-2692 back; CG-2692-Rpt of Marine, Comm Dive, or OCS Casualty; 30Aug2016 10:59:01 EDT; No

cg-2692; CG-2692-Rpt of Marine, Comm Dive, or OCS Casualty; 30Aug2016 10:58:39 EDT; No
Control Number: 5983290-002-EJK
Description: CG-2692B Chemical testing
Evidence Type: Standard

Collection Information
Date/Time: 11Jul2016 15:53:48 EDT
Location: Sector Mobile
Collected By: [REDACTED]; U. S. Coast Guard

Attachments
cg-2692B chemical testing; CG-2692B-Rpt of Mandatory Chem Test Following SMI;
30Aug2016 10:51:40 EDT; No

Control Number: 5983290-003-EJK
Description: CG-2692C personnel casualty
Evidence Type: Standard

Collection Information
Date/Time: 11Jul2016 15:53:00 EDT
Location: Sector Mobile
Collected By: [REDACTED]; U. S. Coast Guard

Attachments
cg-2692C personnel casualty addendum; Other;
30Aug2016 10:51:20 EDT; No

Control Number: 5983290-004-EJK
Description: CG-2692D involved persons and witnesses addendum
Evidence Type: Standard

Collection Information
Date/Time: 11Jul2016 15:53:00 EDT
Location: Sector Mobile
Collected By: [REDACTED]; U. S. Coast Guard

Attachments
cg-2692D involved persons and witnesses addendum; Other;
30Aug2016 10:50:56 EDT; No

Control Number: 5983290-005-EJK
Description: Incident report from the company
Evidence Type: Standard

Collection Information
Date/Time: 11Jul2016 15:53:00 EDT
Location: Sector Mobile
Collected By: [REDACTED]; U. S. Coast Guard

Attachments
Companies incident report back; Other;
30Aug2016 10:49:28 EDT; No
Control Number: 5983290-006-EJK
Description: Customer liability release form
Evidence Type: Standard

Collection Information
Date/Time: 11Jul2016 15:53:00 EDT
Location: Sector Mobile
Collected By: [Redacted]; U. S. Coast Guard

Attachments
participant release back; Other;
Participant release back page; 26Sep2016 13:30:13 EDT; No
participant release front page; Other;
Customer liability release; 26Sep2016 11:45:44 EDT; No

Control Number: 5983290-007-EJK
Description: Witness statements from [Redacted], [Redacted], [Redacted] and [Redacted]
Evidence Type: Standard

Collection Information
Date/Time: 10Aug2016 09:00:00 EDT
Location: Sector Mobile
Collected By: [Redacted]; U. S. Coast Guard

Attachments
statement signed; Witness Statement/Interview Record;
30Aug2016 10:30:40 EDT; No
statement signed; Witness Statement/Interview Record;
30Aug2016 10:30:22 EDT; No
statement signed; Witness Statement/Interview Record;
30Aug2016 10:29:56 EDT; No
statement signed; Witness Statement/Interview Record;
30Aug2016 10:29:28 EDT; No

Control Number: 5983290-008-EJK
Description: Results of the DOT-5 panel chemical test
Evidence Type: Standard

Collection Information
Date/Time: 06Jul2016 11:00:00 EDT
Location: Sector Mobile
Collected By: [Redacted]; U. S. Coast Guard

Attachments
drug test results; Other;
30Aug2016 11:03:41 EDT; No
Control Number: 5983290-009-EJK
Description: IO summary interview of the Captain of the UPPER CLASS
Evidence Type: Standard

Collection Information
Date/Time: 30Aug2016 12:22:23 EDT
Location: Sector Mobile
Collected By: [Redacted]; U. S. Coast Guard

Attachments
IO summary interview with [Redacted]; Witness Statement/Interview Record;
IO interview summary; 30Aug2016 12:24:22 EDT; No

Control Number: 5983290-010-EJK
Description: Weather conditions from 01 July 2016, Gulf Shores, Al.
Evidence Type: Standard

Collection Information
Date/Time: 30Aug2016 17:14:53 EDT
Location: Sector Mobile
Collected By: [Redacted]; U. S. Coast Guard

Attachments
Weather 01July16 Gulf Shores Al; Other;
Weather conditions for 01 July 2016; 30Aug2016 17:18:13 EDT; No

Control Number: 5983290-011-EJK
Description: Alcohol test results for the Captain and Deckhand
Evidence Type: Standard

Collection Information
Date/Time: 31Aug2016 13:49:00 EDT
Location: Sector Mobile
Collected By: [Redacted]; U. S. Coast Guard

Attachments
Alcohol test results for [Redacted], [Redacted] and [Redacted]; Other;
Alcohol test results for Captain and Deckhand; 31Aug2016 17:16:44 EDT; No
VII. TIMELINE

01Jul2011 16:00:10 EDT to 01Jul2011 16:00:10 EDT (Estimated): Injured passenger had a prior medical procedure which included a [redacted].
Timeline Type: Condition
Timeline Subtype: Person - Person Condition
Location: Known
Primary Location: Yes
Description: Gulf of Mexico
Latitude: 30°19.6 N
Longitude: 087°03.4 W

Subject(s) and Details
Name
Person
Type
Injured
Status
Role
Subject of Investigation
System: Personnel
Subsystem: Physical Condition
Component: Other physical capability
Cite:
Involves CG Approved Equipment: No
Security Violation: No
Deficiency: No

01Jul2016 12:00:00 EDT to 01Jul2016 14:00:00 EDT (Estimated): UPPER CLASS gets underway from Gulf Shores, Al with 12 passengers along with the Captain and deckhand.
Timeline Type: Action
Timeline Subtype: Bridge Operations - Shiphandling
Location: Known
Primary Location: Yes
Description: Gulf of Mexico
Latitude: 30°19.6 N
Longitude: 087°03.4 W

Subject(s) and Details
MISLE Incident Investigation Report

01Jul2016 12:00:00 EDT to 01Jul2016 13:30:00 EDT (Estimated): Weather at the time of the incident was scattered clouds, temperature was 88 degrees, average visibility was 10 miles, max gusts during that day were 22mph and max wind speed was calm and died down to 0 at 1230.

Timeline Type: Condition
Timeline Subtype: Environment - Weather Conditions
Location: Known
Primary Location: Yes
Description: Gulf of Mexico

Latitude: 30°19.6 N    Longitude: 087°03.4 W

Subject(s) and Details

01Jul2016 12:01:00 EDT to 01Jul2016 12:10:00 EDT (Estimated): The Captain and Deckhands advised the patrons of general safety, lifejackets, man overboard and fire procedures. There was no mention of launch or recovery instructions.

Timeline Type: Action
Timeline Subtype: Safety and Emergency Operations - General Safety
Location: Known
Primary Location: Yes
Description: Gulf of Mexico

Latitude: 30°19.6 N    Longitude: 087°03.4 W

Subject(s) and Details
01Jul2016 12:01:00 EDT to 01Jul2016 12:01:10 EDT (Estimated): The Captain nor the Deckhand gave pre-flight launch/recovery, flight, dipping or emergency procedures for parasail operations.

Timeline Type: Condition
Timeline Subtype: Organization - Organization Condition
Location: Known

Primary Location: Yes
Description: Gulf of Mexico

Latitude: 30°19.6 N  Longitude: 087°03.4 W

Subject(s) and Details

01Jul2016 13:00:00 EDT to 01Jul2016 13:30:00 EDT (Estimated): Two sets of patrons had taken their turns and the third couple was going up in the parasail chute. The two prior runs were uneventful with no injuries or incidents.

Timeline Type: Action
Timeline Subtype: Passenger Activity - Parasailing/Waterskiing
Location: Known

Primary Location: Yes
Description: Gulf of Mexico

Latitude: 30°19.6 N  Longitude: 087°03.4 W

Subject(s) and Details
MISLE Incident Investigation Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Person</td>
<td>Injured</td>
<td>Subject of Investigation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Person</td>
<td>Not at Risk</td>
<td>Subject of Investigation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Person</td>
<td>At Risk, Not Injured</td>
<td>Witness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Person</td>
<td>Not at Risk</td>
<td>Witness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Witness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

01Jul2016 13:30:00 EDT to 01Jul2016 13:30:00 EDT (Estimated): The third set of patrons took their ride; on the way down the Captain of the UPPER CLASS "dipped" the couple."Dipping" the passenger’s requires them to be pulled no further away than 150 from the vessel. Once the "dip" was done they continued to pull the couple in.

Timeline Type: Action
Timeline Subtype: Passenger Activity - Parasailing/Waterskiing
Location: Known

Primary Location: Yes
Description: Gulf of Mexico

Latitude: 30°19.6 N  Longitude: 087°03.4 W

Subject(s) and Details
### Subject(s) and Details

**01Jul2016 13:30:01 EDT to 01Jul2016 13:30:30 EDT (Known):** The couple was reeled in approximately 10' from the boat when the winds suddenly stopped and the couple dropped almost parallel with the stern of the vessel. The Deckhand continued to reel the parachute in and the Captain was telling the couple to lift their legs up, in order to clear the stern of the vessel.

**Timeline Type:** Condition  
**Timeline Subtype:** Environment - Weather Conditions  
**Location:**  
- Primary Location: Yes  
- Description: Gulf of Mexico  
- Latitude: 30°19.6 N  
- Longitude: 087°03.4 W

**Subject(s) and Details**

**01Jul2016 13:30:02 EDT to 01Jul2016 13:30:03 EDT (Estimated):** With the winch pulling them into the vessel, the female wasn’t able to get her legs lifted up in time and sustained lacerations to both shins. The Male was bruised down his left leg and pelvis but didn’t require additional medical treatment. The injured female was transported to the shore for additional medical treatment.

**Timeline Type:** Event  
**Timeline Subtype:** Personnel Casualty - Injury  
**Location:**  
- Primary Location: Yes  
- Description: Gulf of Mexico  
- Latitude: 30°19.6 N  
- Longitude: 087°03.4 W
MISLE Incident Investigation Report

Name  Type  Status  Role
Person  Injured  Subject of Investigation

Nature Of Event Causing Injuries: Contact Injury- Collision with Fixed Object
Severity: Moderate

Injury Type  Body Region
Laceration  Lower Leg

Casualty Involved Diving: No

19Jul2016 10:00:00 EDT to 19Jul2016 10:00:00 EDT (Estimated): Received CG-2692
Timeline Type: Action
Timeline Subtype: Incident/Casualty Reporting/Notification - CG-2692
Location: Known
Primary Location: Yes
Description: Gulf of Mexico
Latitude: 30°19.6 N  Longitude: 087°03.4 W

Subject(s) and Details
Name  Type  Status  Role
Person  Not at Risk  Other

31Aug2016 13:34:09 EDT to 31Aug2016 17:29:00 EDT (Estimated): Captain and Deckhand of the UPPER CLASS submitted to alcohol testing.
Timeline Type: Action
Timeline Subtype: Drug/Alcohol Testing - Alcohol Testing
Location: Known
Primary Location: Yes
Description: Gulf of Mexico
Latitude: 30°19.6 N  Longitude: 087°03.4 W

Subject(s) and Details
Name  Type  Status  Role
Person  Not at Risk  Subject of Investigation

Reason Directed To Provide Sample(s): Post-casualty
Direction To Provide Sample(s)
Date/Time Directed: 01Jul2016 13:30 EDT
Means Of Direction: Verbal
Organization Directing Chemical Test Sample: Marine Employer
Description: Post casulaty
Chemical Test Sample(s) Provided: Yes

Method Of Analysis: Breath Test
Instrument Used For Analysis: Intoxilizer 400
Date/Time Results Obtained: 01Jul2016 17:29 EDT
Sample Test Results: Alcohol Not Detected
Blood Alcohol Content (BAC):
Laboratory/Individual Conducting Test: Gulf south resources
Description Of Sample Analysis: test #118 intox400 device serial # 052158D
Irregularities In The Analysis Of The Sample: No

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<td>Subject of Investigation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reason Directed To Provide Sample(s): Post-casualty
Direction To Provide Sample(s)
Date/Time Directed: 01Jul2016 13:30 EDT
Means Of Direction: Verbal
Organization Directing Chemical Test Sample: Marine Employer
Description: Alcohol test
Chemical Test Sample(s) Provided: Yes

Method Of Analysis: Breath Test
Instrument Used For Analysis: Intoxilizer 400
Date/Time Results Obtained: 01Jul2016 17:40 EDT
Sample Test Results: Alcohol Not Detected
Blood Alcohol Content (BAC):
Laboratory/Individual Conducting Test: Gulf South Resources
Description Of Sample Analysis: Test 2005, Intoxilizer 400, device # 071845D
Irregularities In The Analysis Of The Sample: No

VIII. CORRESPONDENCE
COTP Endorsement
Source: USCG
Date: 12/19/2016 1:46:50 PM
Attachments:
5983290; Other; 19Dec2016 08:49:26 EST; No

COMDT Final Action Memo
Source: USCG
Date: 6/30/2022 1:43:32 PM
Attachments:
IX. CONCLUSIONS – PART 1. CAUSE

Initiating Event:
Personnel Casualty - Injury (01Jul2016 13:30:02 EDT)

Precondition
Person - Physical Condition - Injured female passanger had pre-exhisting medical issues
Injured female passanger had pre-exhisting medical issues with her back that prevented her from responding in enough time to lift her legs out of the way of the vessels stern.

Condition/Environment - Weather Conditions (01Jul2016 13:30:01 EDT); Gulf of Mexico; The couple was reeled in approximately 10’ from the boat when the winds suddenly stopped and the couple dropped almost parallel with the stern of the vessel. The Deckhand continued to reel the parachute in and the Captain was telling the couple to lift their legs up, in order to clear the stern of the vessel.; Gulf of Mexico

Mismatch - Between Person and Environment - Wind in the area died down as they were recovering parasail passangers.
The wind in the area during that day was calm and out of the NNW at 3.5mph at 12:15 and was reported as calm with no wind at 12:35, that was the approximate time the parasail operator was recovering the third set of riders.

Condition/Environment - Weather Conditions (01Jul2016 12:00:00 EDT); Gulf of Mexico; Weather at the time of the incident was scattered clouds, temperature was 88 degrees, average visibility was 10 miles, max gusts during that day were 22mph and max wind speed was calm and died down to 0 at 1230.; Gulf of Mexico

Condition/Environment - Weather Conditions (01Jul2016 13:30:01 EDT); Gulf of Mexico; The couple was reeled in approximately 10’ from the boat when the winds suddenly stopped and the couple dropped almost parallel with the stern of the vessel. The Deckhand continued to reel the parachute in and the Captain was telling the couple to lift their legs up, in order to clear the stern of the vessel.; Gulf of Mexico

Mismatch - Between Person and Hardware - Vessels stern material
During the recovery of the passengers the lack of wind in the area at the time allowed the couple in the chute to drop rapidly toward the stern of the vessel. The stern of the vessel is made of hard fiberglass and/or steel and not equipped with any padding material. One of the passengers was not able to lift her legs in enough time to clear the stern of the vessel and subsequently suffered substantial injuries to her legs when they contacted the vessels stern.

Condition/Environment - Weather Conditions (01Jul2016 13:30:01 EDT); Gulf of Mexico; The couple was reeled in approximately 10’ from the boat when the winds suddenly stopped and the couple dropped almost parallel with the stern of the vessel. The Deckhand continued to reel the parachute in and the Captain was telling the couple to lift their legs up, in order to clear the stern of the vessel.; Gulf of Mexico

Programs/Guidance/Procedures (Software) – Condition - No requirement for operating procedures prior to parasail flight.
ASTM does not require the Captain or the Deckhand to explain the launch/recovery, flight, dipping, or emergency procedures to the patrons at any time.

Condition/Organization - Organization Condition (01Jul2016 12:01:00 EDT); Gulf of Mexico; The Captain nor the Deckhand gave pre-flight launch/recovery, flight, dipping or emergency procedures for parasail operations.; Chute em up

Failures of Defense Against Subsequent Events in the Incident
XI. SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS

Safety Recommendation # 1: Safety padding on parasail vessel stern combing.

The latent unsafe condition present throughout the parasail community is where the stern of the vessel meets the aft landing platform of the vessel. The corner known as combing creates a rigid 90 degree angle. There is no requirement to have any padding or protective covering on that edge. In the event the parasailor is brought in too low or if the wind dissipates as the passenger is being winched in, creates the potential to cause serious leg and/or bodily injuries if they come into contact with the combing. It is recommended that the American Society for testing and materials (ASTM) and its’ member agencies consider implementing a requirement that the combing be protected with padding.

Date Created: 10Oct2016 EDT
Current Owner Unit: COMDT INV
Date Last Modified: 30Jun2022 09:46:04 EDT
Priority: Normal
Final Agency Action: Concur - Alternate Acceptable Action
Final Agency Comment: I concur with the intent of this recommendation. In January 2012, the Coast Guard requested that stakeholders and WSIA develop voluntary standards for the parasailing industry using the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) consensus standards process. A subcommittee was formally established in the fall of 2012, and the first ASTM standards were published in April 2013.

The ASTM “Standard Practices for Parasailing” continue to be reviewed and have undergone multiple revisions over the past nine years, the most recent version being F3099-19. The parasail industry has taken extensive action towards improving operational safety. Key elements of the standard are: Weather Monitoring and Limits, Equipment, Towline Care, Operations, Crew Requirements, Emergency Procedures, and Patron Responsibility. The Coast Guard continues to monitor the industry’s implementation of the ASTM standards and evaluate their effectiveness. This is completed through Coast Guard presence at annual parasailing conferences and engagement with the Water Sports Industry Association (WSIA) and by periodically providing casualty data to measure ASTM standard effectiveness.

Since this casualty in 2016, the Coast Guard has issued multiple Safety Alerts and Marine Safety Information Bulletins (MSIBs) to the public, which are specific to the parasailing industry. Of particular note, in 2018, 12-18 Safety Alert ‘Hazards of Parasail and Watersport Passenger Transfers’ was published and addresses the Coast Guard’s recommendation to waterport vessel owners and operators to develop written guidance for all aspects of the underway transfer of passengers during transfers.

The closure of this case will allow the Coast Guard to share it and this third party safety recommendation with our parasailing industry partners to further strengthen safety measures within the parasailing industry.

This report, along with similar parasailing cases, will be posted and available to the public on the DCO website here:


J. D. NEUBAUER
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard
Acting Director of Inspections and Compliance

Safety Alerts: