



# UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

## FINDINGS OF CONCERN

### Sector Mobile

April 30, 2020  
Mobile, Alabama

Findings of Concern 005-20

## LACK OF FORMAL RISK ASSESSMENT

**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 findings with an appropriate voluntary action or highlight existing applicable company policies or state/local regulations.

**The Incident.** A foreign-flagged heavy lift cargo vessel was transporting a dry-dock from China to Ingalls Shipyard in Pascagoula, Mississippi. Weather at the time; no waves, flood tide, southeast winds at 6-8 knots and clear skies. Three Pascagoula Bar Pilots were piloting the vessel into the Port of Pascagoula. While making the turn out of the Pascagoula ship channel into the turning basin adjacent to Ingalls Shipyard, the vessel's cargo (dry-dock) struck an electrical service barge and a Navy Destroyer under construction, both moored at Ingalls Shipyard, causing significant damage to all three.

**Contributing Factors and Analysis.** The investigation identified poor judgement on the part of the pilots during and prior to the vessel movement. The pilots did not utilize a sufficient number of assist tugs to maintain a safe evolution given the unusual circumstances. Furthermore, there was no alternative resolution when the forward tug was unable to connect to the bow of the vessel. Additionally, wind and tide data were not properly assessed before and during the evolution. The pilots discussed some concerns prior to the evolution, but did not offer any solutions.

**Findings of Concern.** Coast Guard investigators have identified the following measures implemented by pilots of similar vessels in similar service to mitigate the risks associated with the above identified contributing factors.

- Formally institute and conduct an official risk assessment prior to any infrequent/unfamiliar or unusual situation to include the following:
  - Actively plan well in advance for known and possible unknown hazards or conditions affecting the evolution and be able to implement any necessary precautions.
  - Provide a brief overview and discuss the aforementioned hazards and conditions with all personnel directly involved before the evolution.
  - Openly discuss and adapt to changing conditions during the evolution.
  - Document and discuss the evolution once complete.

**Closing.** These findings of concern are provided for informational purpose only and do not relieve any domestic or international safety, operational, or material requirements. For any questions or comments please contact Sector Mobile Investigations Division by phone at (251) 441-5763 or by email at [secmobile-investigations@uscg.mil](mailto:secmobile-investigations@uscg.mil).