



FINDINGS OF CONCERN

Marine Safety Unit Lake Charles

December 14, 2022
Lake Charles, LA

Findings of Concern 021-22

THE DANGERS OF TAGLINES: ENSURE SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM PROCEDURES ADDRESS SAFETY OF KEY SHIPBOARD OPERATIONS

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 marine 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 an appropriate voluntary action or highlight existing applicable company policies or state/local regulations.

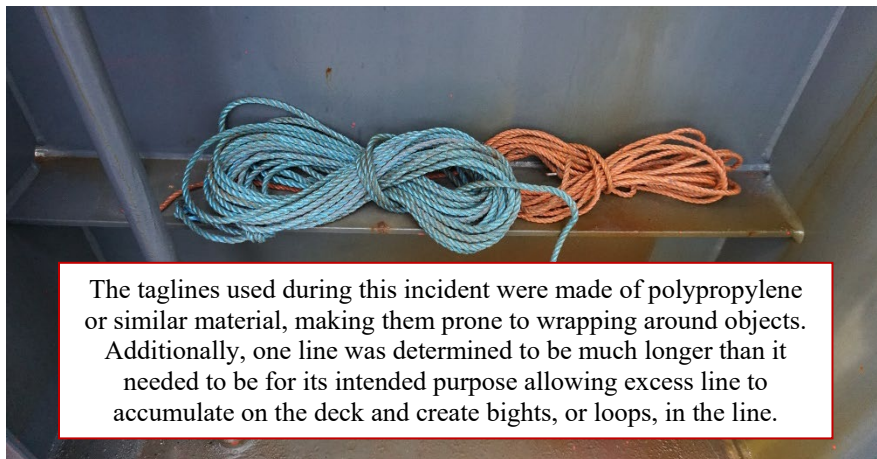
The Incident. A bulk carrier was anchored approximately 10 nautical miles offshore conducting davit operations to shift its cargo hatch covers into its cargo holds. While doing so, an Able Seaman (A/B) became caught in one of the taglines as a cargo hatch cover was being shifted. Consequently, the A/B was pulled over a handrail where he hit his head, fell into the water, and drowned.

Contributing Factors and Analysis. The investigation identified one of the causal factors of this incident as failure of the owner/operator to implement safe and effective procedures for cargo hatch handling.



Findings of Concern. Coast Guard Investigators recommend the following preventive measures to vessel owners/operators and crew to mitigate the risks and contributing factors that led to this incident:

- Review any applicable safety guidelines or Safety Management System (SMS) documentation related to the use of taglines during davit or crane operations to ensure current shipboard practices align with the safety guidance that is in place on board the vessel.
- If using taglines, strongly consider mandating the use of life jackets or other personal flotation devices. The risk for being lifted or pulled overprotective handrails exists when taglines are used in conjunction with crane or davit operations, even if protective handrails are in place. A life jacket or work vest may serve as the last line of defense in a man-overboard situation.
- If not already in place, establish safe procedures for using taglines. Common risks associated with the use of taglines include becoming caught in the bight of a line, being pinned between the load and tagline, or being pulled or picked up due to strain or “loading” on the line. The length of the tagline and material of the line should be considered. Taglines that are too long or too short can create hazardous conditions. Taglines made of polypropylene, nylon, or sysol have a tendency to inadvertently wrap around objects. Ideally, 100% polyester braid-on-braid should be used to mitigate these hazards.



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 Marine Safety Unit Lake Charles Investigations Division by phone at (337) 491-7811 or by email at msulcinv@uscg.mil.