

GUIDANCE NOTE 08/2004

DANGERS INVOLVED HARBOUR TOWING AND MOORING OPERATIONS

To: OWNERS, MANAGERS, MASTERS OFFICERS AND CREWS

This Guidance Note was previously issued as Shipping Notice 8/2004 and the content remains unchanged. A copy of Shipping Notice 8/2004 is attached to, and forms part of, this Guidance Note.

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Shipping Notice 8/2004

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To: OWNERS, MANAGERS, MASTERS AND OFFICERS AND CREWS

Background:

A recent fatal accident occurred on a vessel whilst making fast a harbour tug during mooring operations. A ship's mooring line was being used as a towing hawser and came under load unexpectedly.

1. Preparations Before Towing and Mooring Operations.

Before commencing any harbour towing and mooring operation it is recommended that:

- 1) The risks involved are assessed and appropriate controls are put in place. This formal process should be incorporated in the ship's Safety Management System.
- 2) All harbour towing and mooring operations, especially the method of making fast tugs, should be pre-planned and included in the passage plan. The pilot, bridge team, mooring party and tugs must be apprised of the plan.
- 3) Clear lines of communication must be established between tugs, pilot, bridge team and mooring party.

2. The Dangers Involved in Harbour Towing Operations.

Working with and in the vicinity of mooring ropes can be extremely dangerous especially when they are under load or are about to be put under load. Making fast harbour tugs is particularly hazardous.

It is recommended that:

- 1) Whenever possible, tug's lines should be used for towing rather than using ship's lines.
- 2) If ship's lines are used they must be paid out under control to the tug.
- 3) All crew in a mooring party should wear appropriate safety gear.
- 4) All crew should remain in an area of safety well clear of the towing hawser. Crew must never approach a towing hawser whilst it is under load or about to be put under load.
- 5) Officers in charge of mooring parties must ensure crew do not attempt to make fast a tug unless it is certain that the towing hawser will not come under load until it has been made fast and the crew have retreated to an area of safety.
- 6) All crew must never stand in a bight of rope or enter a danger zone which is an area that would be swept by the rope should it break or part of the system fail.
- 7) Ropes should not be used directly from stowage drums but must be flaked out prior to use.

2. The Dangers Involved in Mooring Operations

Mooring arrangements should be planned so as to minimise the risks to crew and avoid, so far as possible, creating danger zones.

In addition to the recommendations given above it is recommended that:

- 1) All mooring operations and especially the arrangements and method of making fast should be pre-planned. Special attention must be given to planning the way mooring ropes are led from winches and bits to the fairleads. Mooring bits should only be used to lead mooring ropes before the mooring rope is turned up on the bits.
- 2) Mooring ropes should not be led so as to create unnecessary danger zones.
- 3) Mooring ropes should not be made fast on the drum ends of winches.
- 4) Mooring ropes should only be made fast on winches that are specifically designed for that purpose.
- 5) Mooring areas should be kept clear. Ropes not in use should be stowed.

3. Accident Report:

A report on the investigation into the fatal accident will shortly be published. It will be available on www.caymarad.org and www.caymanregs.com and hard copies will be available from;

Cayman Islands Shipping Registry
Vanbrugh House
Grange Drive
Hedge End
Southampton
SO30 2AF
England

4. Other guidance:

The Code of Safe Working Practices published by the UK Maritime and Coastguard Agency offers further advice. It is available on www.caymanregs.com.