



SHIPOWNERS

SECURITY FOR SMALL & SPECIALIST VESSELS

► CASE STUDY

Damage Caused by Fouled Lines

The Incident

The incident occurred during berthing operations. While the mooring lines were in use they became stretched and fouled in the engines, causing them to become taut and parted.

Fortunately, the resulting recoil of the line ran vertically due to the 90 degree angle from the universal leads to the propeller. Luckily the stern tube seal was found not to be damaged. Nonetheless, the incident caused the vessel to go off-hire for repairs.

Observations

The immediate cause of the incident was excessive slackening of the ropes when the propeller was turning. Causal factors included:

- A lack of situational awareness and inadequate understanding of the physical constraints of the ship as the leads being utilised were almost directly above the propeller.
- Ineffective communication between bridge and mooring station. The Bridge issued orders to slack when the propeller was turning.
- Mooring stations obeyed the instructions without checking propeller clearance and/or warning the bridge.
- Excessive line was laid out on deck which ran out to foul the propeller.
- There was inadequate supervision in place.

The root causes were found to be:

- Inadequate understanding of risks involved.
- A lack of situational awareness of the surroundings.

Preventative actions

To prevent incidents such as this, the following actions should be implemented:

- An appropriate risk assessment to be carried out for mooring operations.
- An appropriate safety briefing/toolbox talk to be conducted by the person in charge, ensuring that all crew involved in the mooring operation know the risks and actions to prevent incidents.
- New joiners to the vessel should be properly briefed on ship-specific tasks and constraints.
- Ensure effective communication between bridge and mooring stations to include warnings as to prevent such incidents.
- Persons in charge to take extra precautions and ensure they supervise the area and task properly.
- Re-train crew on hazards and dangers involved in mooring operations.
- Consider that the entire mooring deck area is a potential snap-back zone. All crew working on a mooring deck should be made aware of this with clear visible signage.

Source

IMCA Safety Flash 17/16