CASE STUDY

Cable reel deck cargo broke loose

Please note that this case study has been provided by The Nautical Institute’s MARS reporting scheme

The incident
An offshore support vessel sailed from her shore base on a routine supply run to her designated oilfield. Her deck was loaded with a variety of tubing, casings, pallets, tool boxes, food containers and one large unpacked wooden cable reel, weighing about 11 tonnes. The reel was stowed with its axis fore-and-aft and was pre-slung with an extra long 12mm steel wire sling passed through the very narrow central hole, which precluded threading any other securing rope or chain through the coil. The sling was unsuitable for securing, so the ship’s crew secured the reel by pushing wooden wedges under it and tightening a chain around its girth. Additionally, the vessel’s tugger wire was tensioned at the reel’s midheight.

Soon after sailing, the ship rolled and pitched heavily in a gale, and the accelerations imposed large forces on the lashings. Subsequent movements displaced the wedges and the bridge watch observed the reel moving freely on the deck. The Master was called, speed reduced to minimum and heading altered into the sea and swell. With the ship now pitching gently, the crew managed to throw some square timber (4x4s) across the path of the runaway reel path and gradually regained control over the hazardous situation. A dunnage ‘grid’ was quickly nailed around the base and the reel remained safely inside this while the crew re-tightened additional wires and chains. About an hour later, the reel was safely lifted off by the offshore installation to which it was consigned.

Conclusions
• Unpacked wooden cable reels, especially those with a very narrow central hole, cannot be effectively secured and must be shipped only in containers or skids.
• Cable reels made of steel with exposed cross-members or spokes may be shipped unpacked, but must be secured with sufficient number of lashings (chains or wires) and wooden wedges as determined from the vessel’s approved Cargo Securing Manual (CSM) or as per the guidelines contained in the IMO publication Code of Safer Practice for Cargo Stowage and Securing (CSS Code).

The training ideas listed below are recommended by the Club to raise awareness of the issues related to this case study and to potentially be used as part of the Member’s own training programme. These are in addition to the original case study taken from The Nautical Institute’s MARS reporting scheme.

Training ideas
As highlighted the cause of this case was the incorrect stowage of cargo on board. It is therefore suggested that crew to be made aware of proper lashing techniques. This to include:
• Lashing patterns for various cargoes such as cable reels, steel pipes, steel plates, bagged cargoes and heavy lift cargoes etc.
• Methods of calculating holding power / strength of the lashing and confirming it is sufficient for the type of cargo to be carried, length of voyage and the weather conditions anticipated.
• Master to ensure that relevant deck officers are familiar with the basic lashing requirements as required by publications such as the vessel’s Cargo Securing Manual (CSM), IMO Publication Code of Safe Practice for Cargo Stowage and Securing (CSS Code) and other industry ‘good practice’ books such as ‘Thomas Stowage – The properties and stowage of cargoes’.
CASE STUDY

Cable reel deck cargo broke loose contd.

- Senior deck officers to be trained in preparing Lashing, Stowage and Dunnaging (LSD) diagrams for standard lashing plans and for critical cargoes / heavy lift cargoes. These can then be used as references when dealing with such cargoes.
- Crew members are reminded to question any lashing plan or cargo securing arrangement with the Master if they are concerned with its effectiveness.