

Marine Safety Flash

A16-02 (11th January 2016)



Tugger Wire

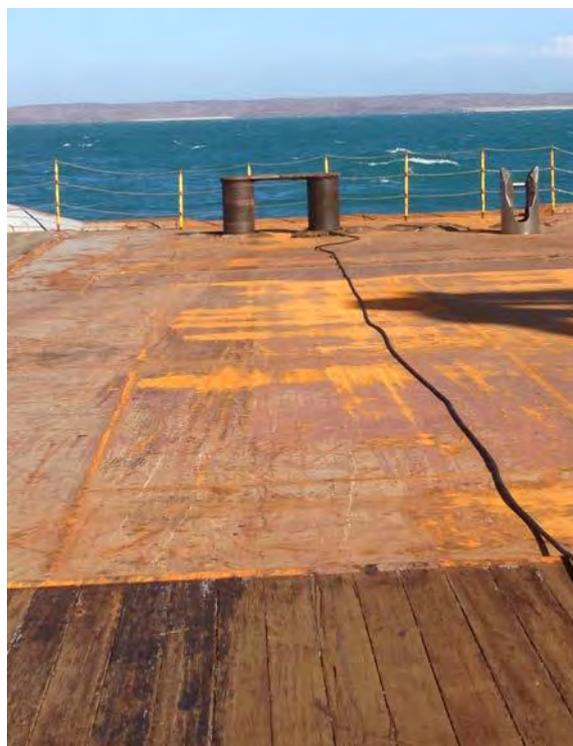
Incident Overview

A potentially serious incident occurred recently on board a vessel in which a deck officer was struck on the chest by the chain tail and attached safety hook at the end of a tugger wire. The impact knocked the officer to the deck and he suffered lacerations to the back of the head.

Fortunately the vessel was in port, arrangements were made to transfer the IP ashore for medical attention, and the lacerations were sutured and appropriate follow-up medical care given. The IP was able to return on board to continue working after a period of medical observation.

Immediately prior to the incident the ship's two 2nd Mates and two Integrated Ratings had used the ship's centre-line tugger winch at the forward end of the deck in an operation to range chains from one of the ship's rig chain lockers onto the deck. The tugger wire was lying on deck with no load attached, but the working end was passed around the starboard inner tow pin which was raised. The IP (2 Page 1 of 2nd Mate) was standing off the centreline forward controlling the tugger winch using a remote controller to stow the wire.

The IP was standing in a position where he could view the end of the wire and winch drum simultaneously.



Tugger wire led along the deck and around tow pin



Approximate position of IP with tugger winch controller

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Key Findings

Preliminary investigation has determined that the hook at the end of the tugger wire became trapped in the gap, or annulus, between the raised tow pin and the fairing that surrounds the pin's cap plate when the pin is retracted.



Tugger hook caught in annulus between raised tow pin and fairing

Mark caused by hook caught between raised tow pin and fairing

The tugger wire went tight as the hook jammed momentarily between the base of the raised tow pin and the fairing. That was noticed by the IP and others on deck who reported hearing the wire tightening. The IP released the winch remote control to stop the winch. The witnesses report that the hook freed from where it had been jammed and the wire snapped back travelling forward up the deck at speed.

The hook and/or chain struck the IP on the chest, knocking him to the deck. The witness reports are not unanimous about whether the IP's head lacerations were caused by the hook striking him or his head contacting the deck.

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It is worth noting that those involved carried out a JSA and toolbox talk before the operation started. All persons involved were correctly attired in appropriate PPE. The JSA specifically recognised and mentioned the potential for 'Being struck by wire' among the hazards and 'Injury to personnel' as a consequence. However, the hazard that actually occurred was not foreseen. This notification is issued to draw immediate attention to this event while further more detailed investigation continues.