

Safety Alert

Number: 18-13

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Subject: Cargo Shifted on Deck - High Potential Near Miss

What Happened / Narrative

There was a recent experience for a high potential near miss during final approach to an offshore installation. The vessel had been alongside working cargo earlier in the day, due to deteriorating weather conditions the vessel ceased work and departed the 500m zone. The cargo was unsecured to facilitate cargo operations, on departing the 500m zone to wait on the weather, the cargo was not re-secured.

The weather forecast available to the vessel predicted a period in the early evening where the weather would improve to workable conditions. The crew monitored the weather throughout the afternoon, noting that it was improving in line with the forecast. It was decided to set up in DP at 1800 to assess the weather conditions fully. After monitoring for 30 minutes with no issues the vessel prepared for entry into the 500m zone. At this point the wind speeds was recorded as force 6, with 2.5m sea.

Pre-entry checks were complete and the vessel manoeuvred to the DP set up point, 1.5 times the vessels length from the platform in a drift off position. The vessel conducted DP set up for 15 minutes and started to gradually move towards the working position.

As the vessel was being manoeuvred towards the working position, a wave significantly larger than the forecast or of maximum wave height passed the vessel. The wave caused a significantly larger pitching motion, the stern of the vessel dropped into the trough behind the wave and subsequently dug into the face of the following wave causing the wave to break over the stern of the vessel (photo 1)

The water on deck caused a 24ft basket and 20 mud skips to be shifted across and up the deck. (photo 2)

Consequences:

- Personnel – Nil, although significant potential for harm
- Environment – Nil
- Asset – Nil
- Cargo – Nil, although potential for damage

Why Did it Happen / Cause

Observations:

- The weather was assessed for 30 minutes prior to entering the 500m zone, there were no station keeping difficulties and power utilisation was within the adverse weather working guideline limits.
- The cargo shift occurred inside the 500m zone as the vessel was approaching position, there was therefore the potential for crew to be on deck, as such it was treated as high potential near miss.
- The vessels client required 30 minutes for DP set up.
- The cargo was left unsecured whilst not being worked.
- The vessels reporting of the incident to the client was not fully in line with their marine operations manual.

Causes:

- The wave encountered was significantly larger than those experienced throughout the day or forecast.
- The vessels positioning in relation to the weather resulted in the part of the vessel offering least protection to the deck, being exposed to the weather.
- The deck cargo was unsecured at the time of shipping the wave.

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Corrective Actions Taken / Recommendations

The vessel owner reminded all of their vessels;

- Cargo is to be secured at all times it is not being worked, regardless of weather conditions. This includes during periods of stand by and Waiting on Weather.
- Reporting of incidents to clients is to be completed in line with their stated requirements.
- DP set up time is to be conducted in line with client requirements or the system manufacturers manual, whichever is greater.

Note:

Further good practice on pre-entry and DP set up is available in the 'Guidelines for Offshore Marine Operations' (GOMO)

Photographs / Supporting Information

