

Anchor drag near-miss incident

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A Member has reported a near-miss incident in which a barge anchor was dragged approximately 300 metres along the seabed and came within metres of a live export pipeline.

Following a visual survey of the pipe 100 m either side of the anchor location, it was confirmed that there was no apparent structural damage to the pipeline.

What were the causes?

The following **causal factors** were identified:

- Failure to identify that available monitoring information indicated a potential anchor drag.

Following investigation **further causes** were identified:

- Training and competence
 - There was no competency defined for the anchor winch operator position.
 - There were no properly identified training requirements for the anchor winch operator position.
- Procedures
 - Anchor operating procedures were available on the vessel. However, the anchor winch operators were not aware of the location or content of the current procedure.
 - The anchor winch operators were unaware of the existence and contents of anchor operating procedures which contained monitoring requirements and contingencies in the event of an anchor dragging.
 - Enforcement of operating procedures in the past had not been thorough and failure to follow procedures has gone uncorrected.
- Management systems
 - Pay-out counting devices were not used as a standard operating practice despite requirement under the procedures.
 - A monitoring tool had been reported as broken four days earlier; the defect had been reported to maintenance but the person in charge was not informed. The anchor winch operators continued the operation without

fixing the tool.

- There was no record of any management system compliance audit having taken place on the barge.
- Safe systems of work
 - Despite one of the anchor winch operators having over 12 months' experience, the two anchor operators were the least experienced on shift at the same time.

Actions

The company involved has put the following actions into place:

- Develop competency matrix for all job roles and monitor competency.
- Implement mentoring system for inexperienced staff.
- Ensure shift schedules are properly balanced to ensure experienced personnel teamed with less experienced personnel.
- Make operating procedures accessible to the crew and ensure crew are aware of operating procedures through ongoing communication.
- Conduct a safety management system audit of the barge to confirm compliance with standard operating procedures.
- Ensure all crew members are appropriately supervised.
- Ensure all crew members are involved in the daily pre-start meetings.
- Ensure safety critical equipment is repaired prior to activities commencing.

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