

Diver emergency decompression following construction barge anchor loss during tropical storm

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A member has reported an incident in which a construction derrick lay barge lost all of its bow/weather anchors during a severe tropical storm.

What happened?

The incident occurred while the barge was in stand-by mode waiting on weather.

At the given time there were nine divers in saturation. When station keeping was lost due to the parting of the bow/weather anchors, the divers were immediately transferred to the hyperbaric rescue chamber. Given the severity of the circumstances, an accelerated emergency decompression schedule was initiated for the saturation divers, in co-ordination with diving medical specialists. The hyperbaric rescue chamber was not launched.

After a few hours, barge station keeping was regained with two anchors-handling tugs. Further to which, once matters stabilised, emergency decompression was stopped. The divers returned safely to the surface using the 'routine' decompression profile. Post-incident medical examinations on the divers were uneventful.

A full investigation is on-going.

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