

Unpublished safety incidents

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IMCA has been notified of slightly more than 200 safety incidents in the 15 months since the start of 2018.

Approximately two thirds of these come from IMCA members; the remainder come from other trade bodies and regulatory organisations, including the Marine Safety Forum (MSF), the UK HSE, the United States Coast Guard (USCG) and the US Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE). Most incidents, but not all, are published. In the last 15 months, IMCA elected not to publish 33 incidents. All but four of those unpublished incidents came from IMCA members.

In many cases where the incident details were not published as part of an IMCA safety flash, the received incident notification was deemed to not have adequate scope for learning meaningful lessons, or the necessary effort required to prepare the incident would not return sufficient value to members. 27 of the 33 incidents fall into these two categories. Members are reminded that the decision whether or not to publish an incident is necessarily subjective and editorial in nature.

The following criteria may lead to submitted incidents being passed over:

- The incident involves a serious personal injury which has not been properly captured in the original communique.
- The incident report has a tendency to either shift responsibility or to apportion blame.
- The incident report uses safety jargon but fails to identify fundamental and obvious corrective actions.
- The incident report is too long and complex for a relatively minor incident (an example would be a non-serious slip/trip where the incident report ran to 11 pages).
- The incident report is too brief for a serious incident (an example would be an incident involving LTIs, dealt with in less than two hundred words, with no discussion of what happened to the injured person).
- The incident report comes in a form that cannot be rendered into an IMCA safety flash in a timely way – for example, incident reports delivered as a scanned PDF image, or in very difficult to understand English.
- The incident report contains no photographs, diagrams or images to support and/or explain the text.

Safety flashes exist to raise safety standards and thus to reduce incidents and injuries. They do this by bringing to the attention of members' employees, issues of

critical safety importance, and thus enabling lessons to be learned. It is important, therefore, to guard the impact and appeal of safety flashes. Just as would any media news publication, we do this by choosing with care what material we do and do not publish.

What matters is not that every incident is published, but that every incident published, and safety flashes as a whole, tell a coherent story. It is this **safety story** that delivers lessons learned and the improvements in safety. It is the safety story that changes attitudes, hearts and minds.

Incidents where there is no permission to publish

The other main reason IMCA does not publish incidents is because members fail to give clear permission to publish. In three cases, this was because there has been no response after repeated attempts over months, from the safety professional responsible for reviewing and approving the draft. Given the volume of good quality safety reporting and information we do receive, further attempts to get permission to publish these is not a good use of time and resources, and the unpublished incident is abandoned.

The third reason is related to the second – the member who shared the incident has subsequently given us clear instructions **not to** publish, normally for reasons relating to legal or commercial complexities.

A short topical summary of the 33 unpublished incidents:

- Vessels and seamanship:
 - gangway incidents
 - hose ruptured during pumping of oil
 - damage to deployed equipment
 - vessel collision
 - vessel inadvertently crossed international border following navigation errors
 - potential collision due to COLREG violation
- Injuries and health:
 - crewman cut hand
 - hand injury during cargo operation
 - injury on ROV LARS step
 - gas quads fell over causing injury
 - outbreak of chicken pox
- Anchoring and mooring:
 - anchor chain collar parted
 - anchor lost during mooring operations
 - anchor wire broke, vessel lost anchor
 - incorrectly weighted monkey's fist
- Lifting:
 - crane boom broke
 - failure of subsea lifting equipment
 - incorrect bridle hook up
 - main crane wire parted
- Small boats:

- unsafe condition – anomaly during lifeboat lowering
- broken lifeboat wire

- Relating to diving:
 - SAT diving carried out with unmarked umbilical
 - neck corrosion in gas bottles

- Other:
 - dropped object in shipyard
 - cutting and grinding safety
 - equipment failure – gas release from valve plug
 - equipment failure – shackles
 - failures when incorrectly closing out planned maintenance tasks
 - fake BOSIET certificates
 - fire in a store – ceiling fan
 - safety valve actuator explosion
 - zipper adhesive failure impacting immersion suits
 - tyre damage to helicopter from helideck lighting.

IMCA Safety Flashes summarise key safety matters and incidents, allowing lessons to be more easily learnt for the benefit of the entire offshore industry.

The effectiveness of the IMCA Safety Flash system depends on the industry sharing information and so avoiding repeat incidents. Incidents are classified according to IOGP's Life Saving Rules.

All information is anonymised or sanitised, as appropriate, and warnings for graphic content included where possible.

IMCA makes every effort to ensure both the accuracy and reliability of the information shared, but is not be liable for any guidance and/or recommendation and/or statement herein contained.

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