

Failure of lifting equipment: Dropped ROV

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A Member has reported an incident during offshore lifting operations in which a sling failed, causing an ROV and TMS to drop 30 cm onto deck.

The incident occurred during moving of the ROV and TMS. The whole assembly, weighing approximately 8 tonnes, was directly slung to the hook of the vessel's crane using a 10 tonne round fibre sling choked around the main lifting eye. The failure of the sling happened when the load was swung towards its temporary landing spot, after it had been lifted from its initial position.

The sling failed suddenly and completely, causing the ROV/TMS assembly to drop from 30 cm onto the deck. There were no injuries, but the frame of the ROV was noticeably damaged.

Findings

Our member's investigation revealed the following:

- The company's own safety management system was not followed by the involved personnel (watch-keeping officer, sub-contractor-s staff and crane operator).
- No lift plan was conducted before the start of the operations.
- The on-duty deck foreman was not present on deck to supervise the operations.
- The adequate rigging equipment and accessories (9.7 tonne four leg assembly and four 4.75 tonne bow shackles) required to lift this particular load was not used, and a 10 tonne round fibre sling was used instead.
- The fibre sling was choked around a sharp edge, and no protection or 'packing' was placed between the sling and the sharp edge.

Actions

Our member identified the following preventative actions:

- Remind all personnel onboard vessels, including sub-contractors and client personnel, to follow company safety management system, particularly with respect to lifting operations.

- Ensure lift plans are undertaken before every lifting operation, and ensure lift plan is strictly followed during lifting operations.
- Ensure the on-duty deck foreman is always present on deck to supervise any rigging and lifting operations.
- Ensure that only certified and adequate rigging and lifting equipment and accessories are used.
- Ensure that improvised solutions are never used for lifting operations.
- Ensure the rigging and lifting equipment and accessories cannot be damaged by sharp edges, chemicals, hot items etc.
- Where appropriate, place protection or 'packing' between slings and any identified sharp edges.
- Remind personnel that sharp edges do not have to be 'razor-sharp' to cause failure of rigging equipment.

Members may wish to refer to the following IMCA documents, in particular the pocket safety cards which are intended for use by vessel crews:

- Guidelines for lifting operations
- Avoiding dropped objects (poster)
- Lifting equipment (pocket card)
- Avoiding dropped objects (pocket card)

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