

Lifting frame detached from fast rescue craft (FRC)

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IMCA has received information relating to an incident in which a lifting frame became detached from a fast rescue craft (FRC) during operations.

What happened?

The incident occurred when the FRC was attempting to come alongside a vessel in good weather with choppy seas. During recovery, the complete lifting frame detached from the boat. No one ended up in the water, but one member of the boat crew was pulled up with the lifting frame and fell down into the boat. The crew member sustained only minor injuries. An investigation and checkup of similar boats revealed cracks around the lifting frames.

This was considered a high potential incident with a potential outcome of multiple fatalities had the frame come loose later in the recovery operation.

What went wrong?

Investigation uncovered cracks, delamination and potential weaknesses in the structure of the anchoring of the lifting frame on this type of FRC.

Lessons learned

Surface cracks are early signs, but it is very difficult to assess severity and any potential delamination as the attachment of the lifting frame is inside the hull.

Actions

In this case, a management decision was taken to cease use of this specific type of FRC and notify the manufacturer immediately. Members may wish to:

- Inspect all FRC, lifeboats and workboats lifting frames and attachments.
- Ensure that there is an appropriate focus on inspection and the detection of cracks in planned maintenance systems.

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