



Warrenpoint Harbour Authority
Notice to Mariners
No. 23 of 2017

Dangerously Weighted Ships Heaving Lines

To: Ship Owners, Operators, Managers, Masters, Pilots, Agents, Stevedores, Fishermen and Yachtsmen.

In the past it was not uncommon for seafarers to weight monkey's fists fitted to the end of heaving lines with pieces of scrap metal or sand, or to attach a heavy item such as a shackle, so that the line would travel a greater distance when thrown. This practice is **no longer acceptable** as it increases the risk of serious injury if a linesman, shore worker or a crewmember aboard a tug is struck by such an object during mooring operations, or if the weighted end hits a member of the vessel's mooring party when the heaving line is thrown back.

The United Kingdom Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) publication "Code of Safe Working Practices for Merchant Seamen", Section 25.3.2, states that:

"Vessel's heaving lines should be constructed with a "monkey's fist" at one end. To prevent personal injury, the "fist" should be made only with rope and should not contain added weighting material".

In reviewing recent incidents, it is our recommended that this unsafe practice is to cease immediately. Monkey's fists in service should be checked to ensure that they contain no additional weights. A monkey's fist found to contain such material should be removed and replaced. Under no circumstances should other weights, such as shackles or other heavy objects, be tied to the end of heaving lines. Prior to throwing a heaving line, the vessel's mooring party should alert the linesmen and tug crew and anyone else in the vicinity that a line is about to be thrown. The operation should only proceed if the area where the heaving line will land is clear of personnel.

Please note attached safety Bulletin from the Maritime & Coastguard Agency



SAFETY BULLETIN

No. 2

DANGEROUSLY WEIGHTED SHIPS HEAVING LINES

There have been several instances where dangerously weighted heaving lines, including the use of monkey's fists with additional weights inserted into them, have been used resulting in serious injury. Further guidance is contained in Ch 26 section 26.3.5 in the 2015 edition of the Code of Safe Working Practices for Merchant Seafarers.



Vessels using dangerously weighted heaving lines in the UK may be subject to prosecution

MSF 5029 Rev 10/1

To arrange a subscription to future Safety Bulletins go to <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/maritime-and-coastguard-agency-mca-safety-bulletins> For further information please contact Ship Safety Branch, Maritime & Coastguard Agency Tel: +44 (0) 2380 329 100
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