NOTICE TO MARINERS

No.7 – 2018

PORT OF HEYSHAM

PILOT BOARDING ARRANGEMENTS

ATTENTION IS DRAWN to the requirement to provide safe pilot boarding arrangements, as per SOLAS Chapter V, Regulation 23.

Particular concern is raised, following a number of defect reports received by Peel Ports, regarding the maintenance and securing of pilot ladders to the vessel.

On several occasions, securing methods have not been carried out in line with guidelines and there have been some obvious signs of lack of proper maintenance.

The examples below highlight the defects experienced by pilots when boarding vessels visiting Peel Group ports.

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Any Heysham pilot who encounters unacceptable boarding arrangements is required to, at the earliest opportunity, notify the Competent Harbour Authority who then notify the Maritime & Coastguard Agency.

A Port State Control or Flag State inspection may result from a defect report.

Delayed pilot boarding operations may also result, if reported defects are not evidenced as being rectified.

Therefore masters, owners, agents and operators of all vessels requiring pilotage services are to ensure their pilot boarding arrangements are fit for purpose.

Guidance can be found in a number of publications including IMPA “The rigging of ladders for pilot transfer” & The Standard Club “Seaman’s guide to pilot ladders”.

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DEFECT REPORTS

Recent defect reports, hazards associated and recommendations for best practice.

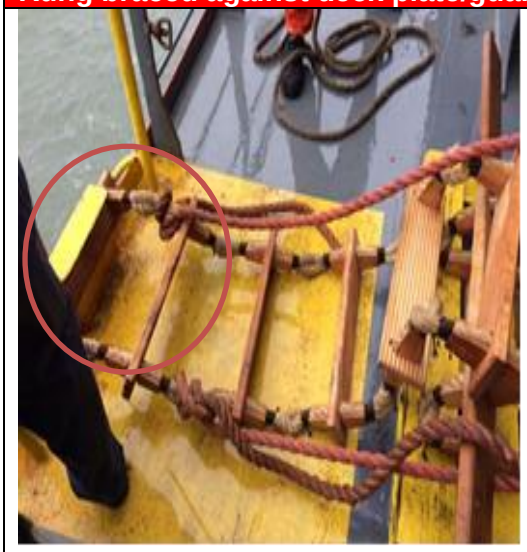
Damaged side rope

This example shows a poorly maintained pilot ladder.

Should this side rope part, the ladder will undoubtedly fall.

All elements of the pilot ladders must be maintained as per SOLAS V23.

Rung braced against deck plate/guard



This example shows a rung braced against a “deck plate/guard”. There is evidence of the side ropes being secured by extra lines, but these lines are unbalanced and slack.

The rung is not designed to bear the weight of the pilot ladder and it is doubtful that the deck guard is, creating risk of the ladder dropping.

Best practice is for the ladder to be of a sufficient length to ensure the tail ends/hard eye are made fast to strong deck points.

If this is not reasonably practicable during risk assessment, determine whether the side ropes on either side of the ladder can be adequately secured to strong deck points with separate lines - using a rolling hitch, equally spaced and the weight of the ladder on these lines. This combined with shackles onto the side ropes iwo a rung, only as secondary mitigation.

The weight of the ladder should not rest on a deck guard

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Spreader braced against stanchion

This example shows the completely unacceptable practice of bracing a spreader against the stanchion of the handrail.

The spreader is not designed to bear the weight of the pilot ladder and there is no evidence of secondary securing.

The side rope itself must be secured to a deck strong point using the aforementioned methods.

The weight of the ladder should not rest on the spreader.

Shackle secured to strong point but braced against rung.

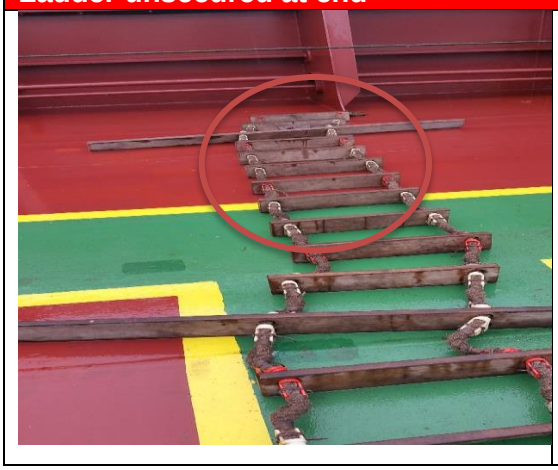
This example shows shackles braced against one of the rungs.

Ladder rungs are only seized onto the side rope, so should the rung, whipping or rung wedges fail, the ladder will drop, at least until the next rung.

The side ropes on either side of the ladder should be secured to a strong point using the aforementioned methods.

The weight of the ladder should not rest on the shackle, on the rung.

Ladder unsecured at end



This example was in conjunction with the shackles onto a rung highlighted above.

If the securing method fails, the entire ladder may move across the deck and injure personnel.

Regardless of any other securing methods mentioned above, the side ropes should themselves always be secured to deck strong points at the tail ends/hard eye.

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