



CAYMAN ISLANDS SHIPPING REGISTRY

Maritime Authority of the Cayman Islands

FLYER TO THE LARGE YACHT INDUSTRY

Fatal accident while launching Personal Water Craft.

A large yacht (750 GT, 53m LOA) was launching Personal Water Craft (PWC) while at anchor in the South of France. When the first PWC had been lowered to main deck height, a deckhand boarded the craft to ride with it to the water, in order to release the lifting slings and bring the PWC round to the stern of the yacht.

The deckhand was standing on the PWC and maintaining balance by holding the synthetic crane cable. With the PWC suspended approximately 2m above the water, lowering was resumed. Almost immediately, the inboard lifting slings failed and the PWC dropped to the water. Without the support of the PWC, the deckhand was unable to hold onto the crane cable and fell onto the PWC in the water. The deckhand landed face down on the PWC and, although remaining conscious throughout, sustained serious chest injuries. The deckhand was removed from the water and transferred to a local hospital. Sadly, he subsequently died from his injuries.



Upon inspection, the steel lifting slings in use were found to have failed in way of the crimped eye connection to the spreader beam. The slings were found to be heavily corroded and this corrosion had not been identified by the onboard maintenance and inspection regime. Further, the history and origin of the lifting sling was not readily apparent. It was stated that they were supplied with the PWC, but the model and manufacturer of the sling could not be identified and no manufacturer's documentation of certification could be located.



Sling and Spreader



Failed slings



Corrosion of slings



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Safety Issues

- The risks inherent in all lifting operations, including the launching of watercraft, must be rigorously assessed and safe working practices developed.
- Procedures for lifting operations should be developed, adhered to during use and periodically reviewed.
- “Man Riding” activities should only be carried out using certified and tested loose gear. The guidance in the *Code of Safe Working Practices for Merchant Seamen*, section 15.2 (Working aloft and outboard) and section 21.2 (Use of lifting equipment) should be fully taken into account.
- Loose gear should be visually inspected before each use and be integrated into the onboard maintenance, inspection and testing regime.
- Examinations of lifting appliances and loose gear should be carried out by persons competent, by virtue of their knowledge and experience, to do so.
- When visually inspecting loose gear, sufficient areas under tape and other “protective coverings” should be inspected such that the overall condition of the loose gear can be assessed.



With “protective” tape



Tape removed



Sling failure

NOTE

This document, containing urgent safety information, has been produced for marine safety purposes only, on the basis of information available to date. The sole objective of the investigation of any accident which is conducted under the Cayman Islands Merchant Shipping Law (2008 Revision) is the prevention of future accidents through the ascertainment of its causes and circumstances. It is not the purpose of an investigation to determine liability or, except as it is necessary to achieve its objective, to apportion blame.

The Maritime Authority of the Cayman Islands (MACI) is carrying out an investigation into this accident. MACI will publish a full report on completion of the investigation. The report will be available from www.cishipping.com.

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