

# SAFETY ALERT

## WORKING WITH OR NEAR MOORING LINES

This safety alert is published following two recent incidents where vessel's mooring lines have parted. In both cases, the lines have parted due to the vessel surging within the harbour. Mooring lines are placed according to the vessel size, berth and weather conditions prevailing/anticipated at the time. Please observe the following safety instructions for all personnel who, for whatever reasons, may be in the vicinity of vessel's mooring lines.

Portland Harbour is prone to the effects of both short and long period wave action which can cause vessels to surge at times whilst alongside the berth. Weather conditions and vessel's displacement can exacerbate this.

### OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

#### Ship's crew

The vessel's moorings are pre-planned by the pilot prior to berthing to best combat the prevailing and anticipated harbour conditions for the time the vessel is in port.

The crew is permitted to add extra lines if it is felt necessary to do so in adverse weather conditions **only** when shore labour is not available. Under no circumstances are the pre-planned moorings to be moved.

Should mooring lines part, the Master **MUST** inform the duty pilot **immediately** on **5525 0999** and utilise his own crew to take appropriate action to secure the vessel.

Crew members must be made aware of the dangers of parting lines and the increased risks with vessel surging.

Crew members accessing the berth to read draughts, check mooring lines or to assist with bunkering operations run a greater risk of being in close proximity to mooring lines. Such crew members need to be especially aware of the dangers of parting lines and **MUST** be instructed to **STAY WELL CLEAR** if they observe creaking and/or tightening of mooring lines.

#### Mooring Gang

The parting of mooring lines can be a hazardous task for people involved in the mooring and letting go of vessels. We must ensure that all preventative measures possible are taken and the correct procedures are followed when undertaking these activities. These include but are not limited to:

1. Stay out of the backlash zone in case a mooring line parts - this is typically in a straight line behind the two points of where the mooring line exits the vessel and the bollard on the shore.
2. Always be aware of creaking lines and vessel movement whilst the vessel is alongside.

3. When using mobile equipment to place mooring lines, where possible, use the mobile equipment as a barricade between you and the mooring line.
4. When attending to a departing vessel, always ensure the lines are slack before moving in to let them go.

### Port Users

During vessel berthing and unberthing operations, **NO ACCESS** is permitted to the berth area – all personnel not involved with mooring or letting go the vessel **MUST** be clear of the berth.

Access to the berth is permitted only when the vessel is all fast, the gangway is in place and the mooring gang clear of the berth. Suspend any cleaning or packing up operations and vacate the berth while un-berthing operations are in progress.

A port user observing a mooring line parting **SHOULD** inform the duty pilot **immediately** on 5525 0999.

All port users must make their employees aware of the dangers of parting lines and the increased risks with vessel surging.

Port users requiring access to the berth for whatever reason, **MUST** stay clear of mooring lines at all times. Port users who need access to areas in the vicinity of mooring lines need to be especially aware of the dangers of parting lines and **MUST** be instructed to **STAY WELL CLEAR** if they observe creaking and/or tightening of mooring lines.

Please ensure all of the above information is read and fully understood prior to entering the berth area.

If you have any queries, please contact the following:

Capt. David Shennan  
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