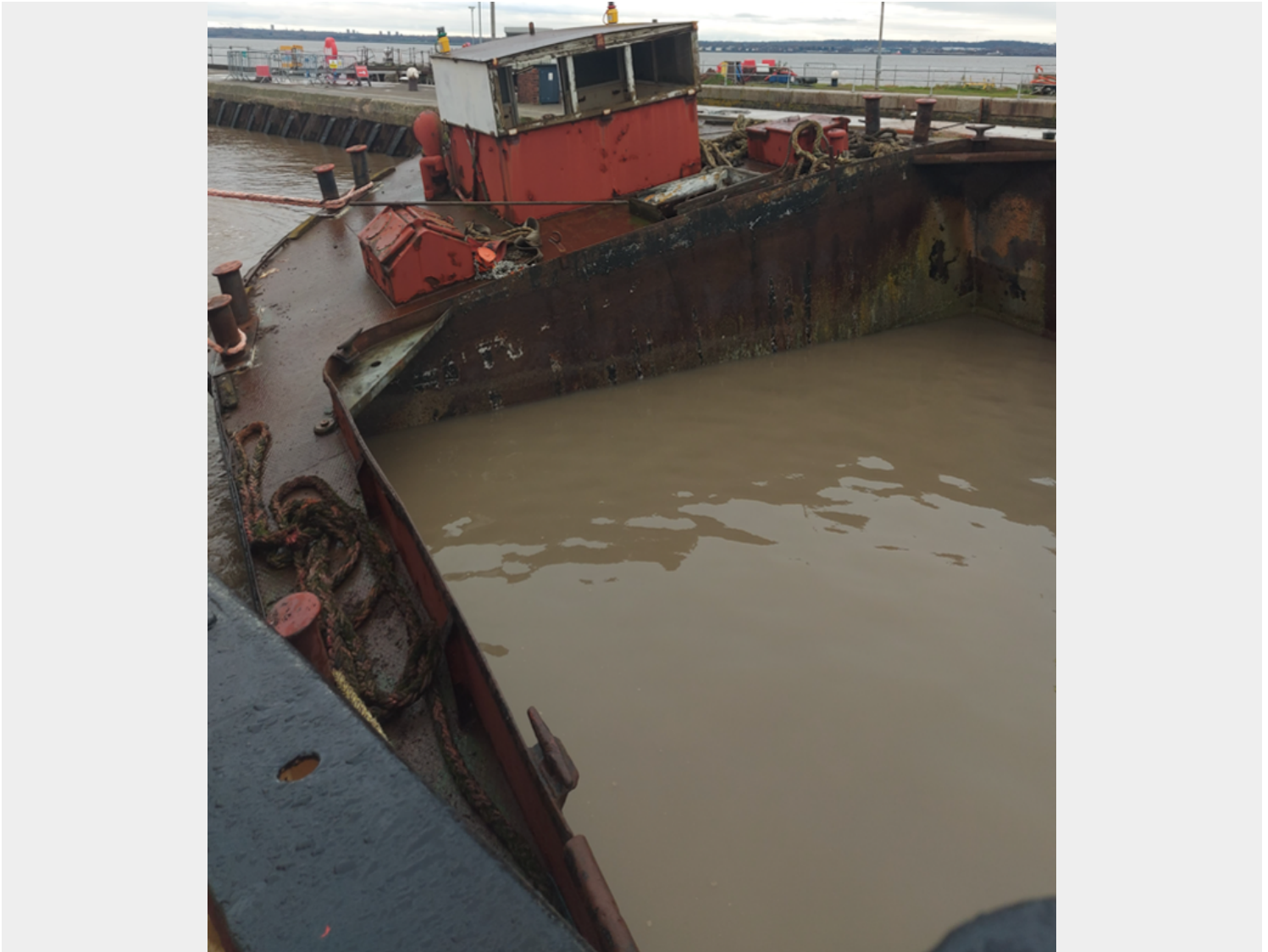


M2194

Posted on 28.02.2024 by Adam Parnell



Categories: [General Maritime](#), [Ports and Harbours](#), [Tugs, Towing and Workboats](#)

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Report Title Unsafe tug/barge operations

Initial Report

Our reporter was very concerned about the operational practices used in their tug and barge operations:

"As a new employee and apprentice in the industry, my onboard experience has raised serious doubts about the overall safety culture and protocols in place. While on the tug, I observed a significant need for more familiarisation and the absence of buddy support. Instead of being paired with a qualified deckhand for essential on-the-job learning, I was left to navigate tasks independently. This absence of mentorship has resulted in a notable gap in my understanding of crucial safety procedures.

More alarmingly, I suffered a severe injury due to exposure to an unlabelled chemical referred to as "carbon remover." The lack of proper labelling and informed usage resulted in severe eye burns. This incident raises concerns about the company's safety protocols for handling hazardous substances.

I also observed unsatisfactory conditions on board, particularly regarding cleanliness. Coupled with the lack of training, this paints a concerning picture of the overall working environment."

Comment

CHIRP raised the reporter's concerns with the Flag State Authority, who are investigating the claims. The ISM Code implicitly requires familiarisation and training (6.3, 6.5).

This must be done to identify all hazards and reduce the associated risks to avoid significant safety incidents on board the vessel.

Key Issues

Capability- The company's management appears to lack the necessary resource capability to ensure that the crew employed is provided with basic safety familiarisation. Does this situation, as described, apply to you? If so, please get in touch with CHIRP.

Teamwork- According to the reporter, more cooperation is needed to help new joiners in the industry. Does your company operate a mentoring system for new joiners or have a "buddy" system?

Culture- The company's management needs to demonstrate a safety culture. Taking on a contract to tow a damaged barge, which is not fit to be on the water, is a clear example of safety being given a very low priority.

