

M2252

Posted on 14.05.2024 by Adam Parnell

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

Report Title Hand injury while mooring on a workboat

Initial Report

A reporter recently had an incident on board one of their vessels, where a deckhand injured the fingers on their right hand.

The vessel was headed to the pontoon to moor alongside her regular berth. As the vessel's aft port quarter came alongside the pontoon, the deckhand used the boat hook to pick up the 'in-situ' mooring line and began feeding the spliced eye through the fairlead. They then started placing the line over the bitts; this is where the deckhand's fingers on their right hand became trapped, and serious injuries were sustained to three fingers.

Comment

Placing a mooring line over the bitts requires very good situational awareness of the vessel's movement, the position of the mooring line, and the crewmember. The risk of hand entrapment is a well-known hazard, and it can be normalised during routine operations.

Once the eye of the mooring line is through the workboat's fairlead, a sufficient length of the mooring line should be available on the workboat so that the eye can be placed over the bitts without the crew's hand making contact with it. This would prevent any sudden snatching of the line, which could trap the crew's fingers if they were holding the eye of the mooring line.

For heavier lines, a short, stout rope can be fastened to the mooring's eye so that it can be hauled over the bitts without any hand contact with the mooring eye.

Vigilance from another crew member, usually the coxswain, to provide a safety cross-check should ensure that hands are always clear of the eye when securing the eye to the bits on the work boat. However, the design of a workboat does not always provide a clear line of sight to the working deck.

Hazards encountered during routine work can be normalised and create greater danger for the crew. Additional safeguards are required, including alerting, training, and changing working practices to keep hands away from the eye of the moorings.

Key Issues

Situational awareness– Maintaining good situational awareness when doing a regular job can be demanding. Do you have someone checking on you?

Communication—It is essential to check on your workmates whilst doing the mooring. Does your workboat have a good line of sight so everyone can see what is happening? Do you have a buddy alerting system?

Design —Is the workboat's design adequate to ensure that mooring transfer operations are optimised for safety? Is the correct length of the in-situ mooring line appropriate? Should it be lengthened to allow less chance of finger entrapment? Or should the mooring line not have a mooring eye and be turned up on the bitts? Management should review the design of the workboats to determine whether they are fit for purpose.



