

MSF: High potential near miss during FRC maintenance

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The Marine Safety Forum (MSF) has published [Safety Alert 26-01](#) relating to an incident where there was an unplanned lowering of an FRC to the sea, and two crew members needed to jump clear.

What happened?

On a vessel, work was being conducted on a change-out of lifting slings on one of the Fast Rescue craft (FRC). This was considered a routine task that had been conducted many times at sea before, and it all appeared to be going well. During the change out of the lifting slings the FRC slipped from the davit cradle whilst two crew members were actually onboard the boat. The FRC went into an uncontrolled descent to sea with both crew members having to jump into the water clear of the falling boat. Both persons were recovered unharmed.



What went wrong?

- It was found that the FRC was only secured by the aft bousing line;
- As the FRC came clear of the davit and started to fall, the stainless steel carabiner on the aft bousing line failed.
- The task could have been planned and executed much better:
 - Whilst it was considered a routine task, there was no written or formal procedure, and no risk assessment.
 - Whilst a Toolbox talk was undertaken, this did not fully cover all the aspects of the work to be undertaken;.
 - There ought have been a Permit to Work.
 - The work was originally planned for the afternoon watch, however at short notice it was decided to attempt to try and complete the task in the morning.

IOGP Life Saving Rules:



Work authorisation



Line of fire

Lessons to learn

- This was a complex and multi-faceted operation, with many different aspects; it ought not have been considered a “routine task”.
- Review all tasks that you consider to be routine, take the time to review and observe, don't ever accept 'we have always done it this way' There might just be a safer alternative.
- Question complacency: “This is the way that we have always done it”? It's OK to feel uneasy and uncomfortable about a task, and if necessary, STOP THE JOB.
- Did the task have to be conducted at sea? Could it have been done later when alongside?

In this case, one of the vessel owner's actions was - don't change FRC slings or davit wires while at sea.

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