

SAFETY BULLETIN No.4 of 2020

ILLEGAL AND DANGEROUS USE OF WEIGHTED HEAVING LINES

The Port of London Authority (PLA) would like to bring to the attention of Ship Owners, Operators, Agents, Masters and Crew operating within the Port of London, of the Safety Bulletin issued by the UK's Maritime & Coastguard Agency. This bulletin contains information in relation to the **illegal and dangerous** practice of weighted heaving lines, which can cause a serious injury or even death, should the weight strike someone ashore.

We would also like to draw to the attention of Masters and crews operating within UK waters, the UK's Code of Safe Working Practices for Merchant Seafarers 2015 (COSWP), and in particular with reference to this bulletin, Chapter 26, Paragraph 26.3.5, which states:

“To prevent person injury to those receiving heaving lines, the ‘monkey’s fist’ should be made with rope only and must not contain added weighting material. Safe alternatives include a small high-visibility soft pouch, filled with fast-draining pea shingle or similar, with a weight of not more than 0.5kg. Under no circumstances is a line to be weighted by items such as shackles, bolts or nuts, or twist locks.”

The guidance regarding the weighting of heaving lines contained within COSWP, are also set out in the Port of London Authority's Code of Practice for the Safe Mooring of Vessels on the Thames 2010, in section 3.2 which states:

*“Ship’s crew should be instructed **not** to use weighted heaving lines.”*

The PLA supports the instructions issued to shore mooring teams within the Port of London, to cut off weighted heaving lines and any added appendages if found to be used during mooring. Furthermore the removed sections will be retained as evidence in the event of any legal action against the vessel and/or user.

A copy of the full copy of Safety Bulletin No.2, issued by the Maritime & Coastguard Agency (MCA), can be found overleaf.

5 June 2020

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BOB BAKER
CHIEF HARBOUR MASTER



Telephone calls, VHF radio traffic, CCTV and radar traffic images may be recorded in the VTS Centres at Gravesend and Woolwich





Maritime &
Coastguard
Agency

SAFETY BULLETIN

No. 2

DANGEROUSLY WEIGHTED SHIPS HEAVING LINES

There have been several instances where dangerously weighted heaving lines, including the use of monkey's fists with additional weights inserted into them, have been used resulting in serious injury.

Further guidance is contained in Ch 26 section 26.3.5 in the 2015 edition of the Code of Safe Working Practices for Merchant Seafarers.



Vessels using dangerously weighted heaving lines in the UK may be subject to prosecution

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