



Local Notice to Mariners

No 06/2021

Use of Dangerously Weighted Heaving Lines **(DWHLs)**

To Ship Owners, Masters, Agents, and their Principals are requested to bring this matter to the attention of vessel masters.

Following the issue of a joint notice by the British Ports Association, British Tug owners Association, Port Skills and Safety, UK Chamber of Shipping, UK Major Ports Group, and UK Marine Pilots Association regarding the unacceptable use of DWHLs in UK ports and harbours, Portland Harbour Authority wishes to advise that the use of DWHLs will not be tolerated.

All Incoming vessels are reminded of their duty to comply with international and domestic codes which are clear and unambiguous on the construction and weight of heaving lines.

The Code of Safe Working Practice (CoSWP) 2020 Amendment, Section 26.3.5 states:

“To prevent personal 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 0.5 kg. Under no circumstances is a line to be weighted by items such as shackles, bolts or nuts, or twist locks.”

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) Code of Practice – Safety and Health in Ports, Section 6.13, Mooring Operations, Para 357 states:

“A “monkey’s fist” at the end of a heaving line should only be made of rope. Additional weights should never be added to it.”

The use of DWHL when thrown by ship’s crew passing mooring ropes or retrieving a messenger line is dangerous and has caused serious injury. DWHL are a significant safety hazard and have the potential to cause serious or fatal injury and cannot be an accepted activity in UK ports and harbours. Indeed, instances could lead to a fine or criminal prosecution of a ship’s master. Attention is drawn to the MCA Safety Bulletin NO.2 Annexed below. Ship-owners, ship-managers, ship’s agents, and their principals are requested to bring this matter to the attention of vessel masters.

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

MSF 5029 Rev 10/1

To arrange a subscription to future Safety Bulletins go to <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/maritime-and-coastguard-agency-mca-safety-bulletins> For further information please contact Ship Safety Branch, Maritime & Coastguard Agency Tel: +44 (0) 2380 329 100
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This Notice is issued under the powers vested by the Portland Harbour Revision Order 1997.

Captain M Shipley
General Manager (Marine)
18th March 2021