Unintended Cargo collision during lifting operations

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When a winch was lifted, the cargo collided with and got stuck against other cargo on the main deck of the receiving vessel.

IOGP Life Saving Rules:

Safe mechanical lifting

What happened?

During a backloading operation from one vessel to another, as cargo was being lowered onto the deck of the receiving vessel, the banksman signalled the crane operator to lower the hoist and disconnect the stinger. However, the other vessel experienced sudden rolling, causing the crane operator to adjust the winch to maintain the position of the main block. When the winch was lifted again, the cargo collided with and got stuck against other cargo on the main deck of the receiving vessel.

What went right?

- The crane operator did not release the main block immediately, preventing uncontrolled cargo movement.
- The crew quickly identified the issue and took action to prevent further damage or personnel injuries.
- The banksman provided proper signals during the operation.
- The stowage plan was referenced and followed for this operation.

What went wrong?

- The unanticipated rolling of one of the vessels was not fully accounted for, leading to cargo instability.
- There was limited clearance on the deck of the receiving vessel, which increased the risk of cargo collision.
- The cargo lift was not adequately stabilized, causing it to swing unexpectedly when the hoist was lifted.
- There was a communication delay between the crane operator and the banksman when the vessel rolled.

What was the cause?

- Sudden rolling of vessel led to instability in the cargo positioning.

- The cargo was lifted in close proximity to other cargo, increasing the likelihood of impact.

Lessons and actions

- Ensure there are thorough toolbox talks conducted before lifting operations to highlight vessel movement risks.
- Be ready to exercise STOP WORK AUTHORITY.
- Risk assessments for lifting operations should take account of potential vessel movements.
- Improved communication between the crane operator, banksman, and deck crew is essential when handling dynamic loads.

Members may wish to refer to

IMCA HSS 019 *Guidelines for lifting operations*

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