

MSF: dropped object inside vessel tank

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The Marine Safety Forum (MSF) have published [Safety Alert 26-05](#) relating to a tank cleaning machine coming lose and falling within a tank on a vessel.

What happened?

It is common for platform supply vessels to be equipped with fixed tank washing machines in some tanks. On one such PSV, such a machine was found on the tank bottom by the tank cleaning team. The washing machine, which weighed 10kg, had fallen from its fixed position due to a broken connection to the supply pipe. No-one was injured.

What went wrong?

The following causes were identified during the investigation:

- Whilst periodic inspection and overhauling of these machines was addressed in the vessel Planned Maintenance System (PMS), the machines were very difficult to access, and as such, inspections had not been carried out properly.
- These washing machines are mounted with threads and are not secured nor considered as Potential Dropped Objects.



Lessons learned

- A careful check of the Potential Dropped Objects register – are there similar or other objects that could become DROPPED objects in different circumstances?
- Consider secondary retention (e.g., safety wire, chain, or lanyard)

between such washing machine and a fixed strong point on the tank structure.

- What can be done about planned maintenance tasks that are really tricky, time-consuming or in difficult to access places? How do we make it easier to do things safely?

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