Dropped bulk bag during loading operations

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A pallet within the bag punctured the material, causing multiple water packs (4.5kg each) to fall approximately 2.5m to the deck below. Exclusion barriers were in place and no personnel were exposed.

IOGP Life Saving Rules:

- Bypassing safety controls
- Line of fire

What happened?

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Example of how lift bags are stored on deck.	*X marks where the bag started to split. Circle marks where split bag was safely landed.*	*Split bag opened to transfer water bottles to new bag*

What went wrong?

The bag ripped because pallets were left in it. The pallets were not removed in accordance with company lifting procedures. This led to the rupture of the bag and the subsequent dropping of several packs of bottled water to the deck below.

- Existing lifting procedures were not followed, existing risk assessment was not complied with.
- The crew did not fully understand the risk that the bulk bag could rip and spill the contents if the pallet (which had sharp edges) was left in it.
- It was apparent that some members of the rigging crew (new to the vessel) were unfamiliar with the company lifting standards.

Lessons learned

- Inspect all lifts before lifting activities, specifically checking for items that could rupture/damage the integrity of the bulk bag, e.g. not just looking for damage.
- Good barrier management during lifting operations is imperative, including the lift path of loads. In this instance, no-one was in the line of fire.
- It needs to be clear that task duties and key risk controls are fully understood by those undertaking the task.

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