

# Talking Points: A Weighty Issue

FOR USE DURING ONBOARD SAFETY MEETINGS



## QUESTIONS

- Q What is shown in the picture?
- Q What are the potential consequences of this arrangement?
- Q Are you aware of any such piece of equipment on board your vessel?
- Q Is a traditional monkey's fist always safe?
- Q What does your vessel's safety management system say concerning weighted heavy lines?

ISSUE: 7 FEBRUARY 2017

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## ANSWERS

### Q What is shown in the picture?

A The pictures show items that have been used to add weight to a heaving line in order to pass the line a greater distance when thrown.

This practice is now considered unacceptable by the majority of ports, pilotage associations and tugs.

### Q What are the potential consequences of this arrangement?

A In extreme cases the weight of the line being thrown from high above the linesman can cause serious injury to personnel or equipment below. In any event a heaving line should be thrown clear of linesmen or boat crew. The person passing the lines should always check the area below and give warning to any person in the area.

Many ports and tug operators now prohibit the use of additional dangerous weights and their use may expose the vessel to fines or other sanctions.

### Q Are you aware of any such piece of equipment on board your vessel?

A Checking the heaving lines should form part of pre-mooring checks at every port. If a dangerously weighted heaving line is found then the weight should be removed and replaced in line with guidance contained within the Code of Safe Working Practices for Merchant Seafarers (COSWP) section 26.3.5.

### Q Is a traditional monkey's fist always safe?

A Not always – whilst COSWP suggests the use of a monkey's fist it states that it should be made of rope only and must not contain added weighting material.

A safe alternative may include a small high-visibility soft pouch, filled with fast draining pea shingle, with a weight of not more than 0.5kg.

### Q What does your vessel's safety management system say concerning weighted heavy lines?

A Take some time to re-read the guidance in your safety management system and compare it with the guidance contained within COSWP.