



Safety Alert

From the International Association of Drilling Contractors

ALERT 02 – 31

LIFEBOAT INCIDENT

WHAT HAPPENED:

While lowering a lifeboat to the water, the engine was placed in forward gear. After reaching the water, the lifeboat was released from the davit cables and the throttle was immediately applied. Within seconds the lifeboat lost all thrust from the propeller and became adrift in the water. A nearby workboat responded and the lifeboat was secured and the personnel taken onboard.

WHAT CAUSED IT:

Examination of the lifeboat revealed a 4-foot piece of 1/2" rope wrapped around the propeller shaft and wedged between the hull and the propeller. This caused the shaft to be pulled to the aft, shearing the key in the coupling at the transmission, resulting in the loss of power to the propeller. It was determined that after a routine lowering of the survival craft earlier in the day, ropes were placed on the davit cables to help guide and steady the craft during retrieval, but had not been removed after securing the lifeboat.

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS: To address this incident, this company did the following:

Instructed Rig Personnel and Maintenance Personnel to:

1. Inspect all survival craft and davit cables, and remove any rope or other debris.
2. When ropes or lanyards are attached to survival craft and / or davit cables for testing purposes, they are to be immediately removed at the completion of the task.

The Corrective Actions stated in this alert are one company's attempts to address the incident, and do not necessarily reflect the position of IADC or the IADC HSE Committee.

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Issued July 2002