The Swedish Club

MONTHLY SAFETY SCENARIO

MAY 2024

Cargo damage caused by broken lashings in heavy weather

A general cargo vessel equipped with two cargo holds was planning to load in three different ports. The vessel's Master requested dunnage and lashing material from the charterer for loading operations in the last port. This included 64 stoppers, 64 H-beams and 50 D-Rings. Everything except the H-beams was delivered to the vessel.

The charterer had also arranged for a supercargo to be on board supervising the loading to make sure that the cargo securing was carried out properly. They were present at all ports except the final loading port.

Cargo securing and lashing in all three ports was carried out by the crew. A lashing plan had not been drawn up by the charterers for any of the loading ports.

Although weather routeing was in place, a few days into the voyage, the vessel encountered heavy weather in the Pacific Ocean with Beaufort 9 winds. The vessel was rolling and pitching heavily, and the Master decided to reduce speed to half ahead and adjust the course to reduce movement.

The fire alarm was then triggered in cargo hold 1, followed by dense smoke. The Master activated the cargo hold sprinkler system to prevent any potential fire from spreading. Two hours later the crew entered the cargo hold with breathing apparatus and fire suits on. No fire was detected but five layers of pipes had broken loose and shifted. After a few hours the crew managed to relash the pipes.

The heavy weather calmed down but three days later the weather deteriorated again with Beaufort 8 winds.

Loud noises were heard from the cargo area. Once again, cargo had broken loose and was moving in the cargo hold, causing damage to the vessel's structure and adjacent

cargo. The crew entered the cargo hold again to try and secure the cargo. They saw that one 80m cargo unit had shifted causing damage to other cargo units and the vessel's structure. The crew failed to secure the unit.

For the safety of the crew the Master decided to abandon the operation. The weather deteriorated and the Master deviated to the nearest port of refuge.

Questions

When discussing this case please consider that the actions taken at the time made sense for all involved. Do not only judge but also ask why you think these actions were taken and could this happen on your vessel?

1. What were the immediate causes of this accident?
2. What is the risk of this type of accident happening to our vessel?
3. What are our procedures for securing cargo?
4. How do we check that it has been secured correctly?
5. When we will be encountering heavy weather how do we ensure that equipment and cargo is secured correctly?
6. Do we have Risk Assessment procedures on board that address these risks?
7. How could this accident have been prevented?
8. What sections in our SMS, if any, were breached?
9. Would our SMS have been enough to prevent this accident?
10. If procedures weren't followed, why do you think this was the case?
11. What can we learn?