

**Type of Incident:**

**Breakdown of the anchor windlass**

**Short Description**

This LL is to highlight an accident that could have been avoided if the weather forecast was assessed in detail and mitigation actions taken in due time.

*We have experienced several accidents resulting in high costs and with severe potentials for personnel injuries when the crew with best intentions has tried to save the day.*



**Description**

The vessel dropped anchor at Maas No. 5 anchorage with 7 shackles in the water at 21.0m depth. The weather was fair when the vessel was well anchored. Before leaving the bridge, the Master and the Navigating Officer had a thorough discussion regarding the movement of the bad weather which was expected late next evening and the following day that would affect the vessel's current position. The Master ordered the Navigating officer to continuously update the BVS weather data forecast and have a listening watch on the VHF to monitor the movement of the weather and relay this to the relieving officers.

Through the night the weather picked up to force 8 in periods and a change in sea condition and strong winds were encountered in the morning. At this time the Chain stopper scraped off and the pin was bent, and it was discovered that there were 11 shackles on deck at this point. Master ordered to heave up the anchor and the following happened:

- The First attempt caused a hydraulic leak in the hydraulic motor due to operating the anchor windlass exceeding the parameters for the windlass. After replacing the hydraulic motor 3 hours later,
- A second attempt to heave up the anchor resulted in one more failure to the hydraulic motor.

**Causes (Immediate and Root Cause)**

The immediate cause of the incident is the extreme weather that came earlier than expected. The gale-force wind and very rough seas caused the rapid release of the anchor chain due to too much tension in the chain.

**Actions / recommendations:**

**We ask that the above incident is discussed on board, to promote safe anchoring (mooring)**

- Spend some time with the Bridge team and find the best practice on how to evaluate and act when there is a severe weather forecast or a sudden change in the weather conditions. Highlight the importance of taking required actions when you can and not when you must.
- Familiarize capacity and safe operational limits for the winch with regards to tension on the anchor chain caused by the depth and the elements.
- Discuss what could have been done to prevent this from happening?