

CIRCULAR – Due diligence for Service Provider, prior commencement of the STS Operation

Below case is a real one; however anonymity is preserved for confidentiality purposes

THE CASE

DYNAMARINE was recently appointed by a P&I Club in the assessment of a Collision Accident that took place during an STS OPERATION between 2 ships **which are not members of the onlineSTS.net** service.

The P&I Club was acting on behalf of the maneuvering vessel that collided during approaching with the constant heading vessel. The STS mooring operation was an underway operation. The collision occurred due to parting of the front pennant rigging line of the forward fender, during the initial contact of vessels (Figure 1). As a result, all 4 fenders dislocated towards the aft parallel body, thus exposing a large side shell area of forward quarter unprotected (figure 2). Further to this event, the maneuvering ship collided on the STBD side of the constant heading vessel.



Figure 1



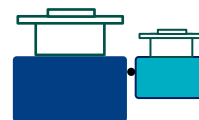
Figure 2

An obvious observation is that the responsibility lays with the maneuvering vessel rather the constant heading vessel. Although the case **was considered to end in favor of the constant heading vessel**, a close examination of both Masters' responsibilities as per OCIMF guidelines **altered the course from the initial case settlement, probably ending as a knock-for-knock.**

WHAT WENT WRONG

The primary pennant fender rope broke during the initial contact (Figure 1) ending in dislocation for fenders. No backup pennant fender rope existed. The condition and type of the forward pennant fender rope was not according to manufacturer requirements, thus not as per ISO 17357:2002.

Although secondary fenders were fitted those did not prevent the collision.



FAILURE TO MEET OCIMF GUIDELINES

According to OCIMF guidelines the following should have taken place:

1. A joint plan should have taken place prior the STS operation as per paragraph 5.2 of OCIMF guidelines.
2. Both Masters should have requested certificates of fenders, hoses and also the qualification of the POAC according to paragraph 2.5 and 9.1.3 of OCIMF
3. In case the rigging of the fenders was not as per OCIMF guidelines, then the operation should not start.

PROPOSED ACTIONS FOR onlineSTS.net members

Primary concern of the onlineSTS.net service is the due diligence and we endeavour to mitigate the liability exposure of our members. We propose that the following actions should have taken place.

1. The service provider should always inform the MASTER of the number and size of the fenders, well prior the commencement of the STS Operation.
2. Fenders size should be in accordance with PART B of the screening and risk assessment report. If the nominated fenders are different from those shown at PART B, DYNAMARINE should be notified (sts@onlinests.net) in case the Master has limited knowledge for evaluation.
3. DYNAMARINE will immediately proceed in amending the fender evaluation section of PART B **to further include** the Manufacturer's **suggested pennant rope** and **chain diameter** with respect to the fender size. In this way the MASTER will have a guideline, for evaluation purposes, when the fenders arrive on-board.
4. Although onlineSTS.net approaches the Service Provider for obtaining the POAC experience, prior each STS Operation, we do not receive always an answer from the Service Provider. Some Service Providers answer and some do not. This procedure distinguishes the prudent service providers from the others. It is suggested that the POAC experience questionnaire to be requested from the commercial during vessel fixture and the MASTER should not start the STS Operation if a confirmation has not been provided by onlineSTS.net.
5. Certificates of Fenders and hoses should always be requested prior the initiation of the STS Operation. This is a requirement that should be forwarded from the commercial department, as mentioned above. DYNAMARINE should be notified about the maintenance certificates, either through the Operators or the MASTER. An evaluation of the fenders and hoses should take place as part of due diligence and OCIMF guidelines.
6. The joint plan should be requested from the POAC for review by the MASTER. Detailed guidelines will be shortly issued by DYNAMARINE on the Joint Plan and per 5.2 paragraph of OCIMF in order to allow the MASTERS to review this procedure, for compliance purposes.