



EHMC
European Harbour Masters' Committee



European Regional Committee of IHMA
International Harbour Masters' Association

The Missing Link

Improving the mooring process

The mooring process appears to be the forgotten link in the nautical chain. This became evident during the making of the EHMC Video the Chain, a film about strengthening the whole nautical chain through a greater awareness of all its' links. Mooring activities are a concern because of the number of accidents, the diminishing nautical skills on board ships and at terminals and the apparent lack of knowledge of all the components that affect safe mooring. This video shows the entire mooring process, from the production of a mooring line up to the vessel coming alongside, from the basic rules for a mooring plan to safe working loads and maximum holding capacities.

Some background information on the realisation of the video "the Missing Link";

The EHMC Seminar "Extreme Weather Decisions" in Gdansk, June 2009, showed a wide recognition amongst harbour masters that deteriorating weather conditions, in combination with the ever increasing ship dimensions and logistic pressures, is a subject that merits the utmost attention of Harbour Masters. Mooring procedures in combination with bad weather was one of the highlights of the day; accidents with vessels breaking loose of its moorings may cause serious damage, damage that is not always covered by insurances. At the same time however these accidents may be prevented by better procedures; the topic safe mooring in bad weather was on the agenda.

The workshop "Extreme weather conditions/safe mooring policy" at the IHMA congress, April 2010, showed that there is a large amount of uncertainty in day-to-day working practices in the mooring process and acknowledged the fact that safety in mooring is negatively influenced by the little knowledge of the whole mooring chain.

A work group, under the leadership of Ben van Scherpenzeel, subsequently was formed, consisting of experts from port authorities and companies in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, United Kingdom, Singapore and the Netherlands. The group addressed the issues of mooring policies, admission policy, communication and tug operations. What followed were many expert opinions (including the Nautical Institutes), many discussions and the awareness that many a best practise for sure is not yet common practise!



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Why is it important for vessels, ports and terminals to know how a vessel should be moored safe and quickly?

- 1) Mooring activities are still a concern for vessels due to the number of accidents.
- 2) If the vessel damages quays or cranes due to the fact that it broke free of her moorings, the vessel has only limited liability. The port or terminal has to pay for all the damage which is not covered by insurance of the vessel.
- 3) Quick mooring saves time which improves the terminal efficiency and the turn around time of the vessel.
- 4) Quick mooring reduces emissions, not only due to fewer emissions of tugs and auxiliary engines, but also due to the reduced speed to the next port.
- 5) Quick mooring reduces the number of hours for pilots, tugs and linemen, making their organisations more efficient.
- 6) Mooring lines and winches is an area that has limited attention of class / flag state inspections

The video's the Chain and the Missing Link are both initiatives of Ben van Scherpenzeel for the European Harbour Masters' Committee (EHMC), Regional Committee of the International Harbour Masters' Association (IHMA).

The Missing Link was released in September 2011.

Presentation and introduction to the video;

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