


Masters 'compromised'

Nautilus Telegraph February 2017

 Danish marine accident investigators have warned about the way in which the authority of ship masters is being compromised by commercial interests.

The concern is voiced in a report on an incident in January 2016 in which a jack-up platform being towed by a Maltese-flagged tug had to be evacuated by its crew after the towline broke in rough seas off the coast of Jutland.

The 3,776gt *Sea Worker* — which had been used to support windfarm installation operations — was declared a total loss after grounding when the AHTS *Amber II* was unable to reconnect the tow using emergency equipment.

The Danish Maritime Accident Investigation Board (DMAIB) concluded that the immediate cause of the incident was the towing pennant breaking as a result of overload caused by the strains created by high winds, waves and strong currents. It said the general towing arrangement had been under-sized for the operation to tow the platform from Frederikshavn to Esbjerg.



The jack-up platform *Sea Worker* was declared a total loss after its tow broke off the Danish coast Picture: DMAIB


But the report also noted that a number of organisational issues were key contributory factors. Divided responsibilities for planning and conducting the project, along with fragmented allocation of authority, had resulted in problems becoming more complex and difficult to overcome, it added.

'It was not until the organisation ran out of solutions to seemingly

isolated problems that the involved persons realised that the towage operation had changed from a manageable operational situation into an emergency,' the DMAIB said. 'When the emergency was evident to all involved, the ship was too close to shore, which meant that the response time for help exceeded the expected time for when the platform would drift aground.'

The report pointed to the 'complicated overlap of authority' between the masters on the tug and the platform, noting how 'the traditional idea of the master as a central, over-riding authority' is compromised by conflicting goals of commercial interests and safety. 'Both can influence the master's perception of his professionalism and his continued employment,' it added.

SEE MORE ⁴ SHARE **Call to**

 Nautilus has rep... for better CCTV r... passenger areas onb... The Union has bee... owners to install more... ferries and cruiseships... increasing number of... passenger disappear... In the latest, a 74-y... passenger went missi...

 **SOLAR SOLVE**
Brand leading anti-glare
Reject up to 93%
Reduce heat by
Reduce demand on
without SOLAR

SOLAR SOL
www.sol
T: +44 (0) 191 454