SAFETY SPOTLIGHT

MARINER SAFETY RESEARCH INITIATIVE

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Container Lashing & Un-lashing

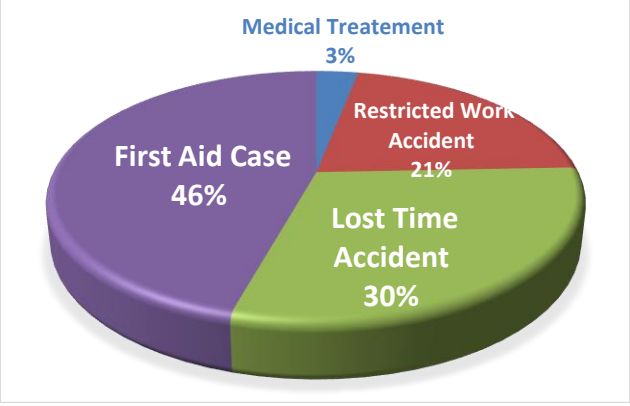
INTRODUCTION

Container lashing, is the process of securing containers together on board ships and container un-lashing/de-lashing is un-securing the containers when the transport is complete. This is known as one of the most risky activities in the marine cargo handling sector. A container is secured to a ship by means of lashing rods, turnbuckles, twist-locks, etc. This process prevents the containers from moving from their place, or falling overboard during rough seas or heavy winds. Container lashing has been the cause of many seafarer close calls, injuries and even fatalities. This document explores the many safety considerations associated with container lashing and un-lashing activities, and offers guidance on creating a safer work environment.

MSRI INJURY DATABASE

According to the ABS Mariner Safety Research Initiative (MSRI), almost half of the injuries associated with lashing and unlashing were First Aid Cases (46%), followed by Lost Time Accidents (30%), and Restricted Work Accidents (21%) (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Lashing/ Unlashing Injury Severity



Container lashing and un-lashing injuries can be caused by many aspects of the job. Figure 2 shows a breakdown of the types of events that led to an injury.

Being struck by/ against something is the cause of 42% of injuries related to lashing/un-lashing activities, followed closely by falls, slips, and trips (36%). A frequent comment within the incident reports is the issue of housekeeping on the deck during lashing/un-lashing activities. It is important to properly store equipment (lashing rods, turnbuckles, twist-locks, etc.) when finished a job, to avoid being struck by/against objects, or falling, slipping, or tripping on the deck. Many incidents can also be avoided by maintaining situational awareness at all times.

Figure 2: Type of event leading to lashing/un-lashing Incident

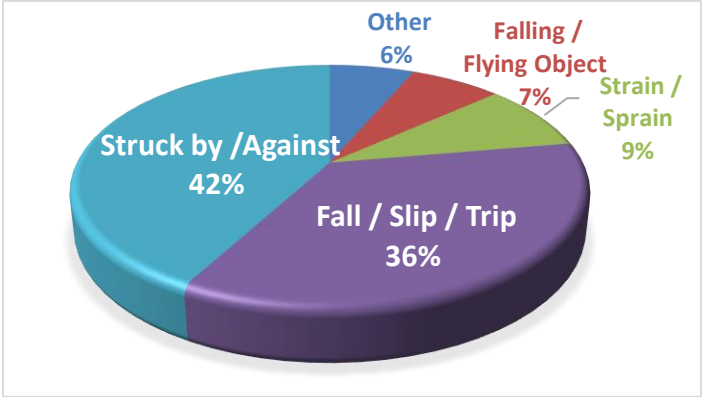


Figure 3 shows how injuries caused by lashing /un-lashing affected the extremities of the body the most, with 28% of injuries occurring to the leg and foot, and 24% of injuries affecting the arm and hand.

Figure 3: Location on Body of Injury