

# Safety Alert

**Number:** 25-02  
**Subject:** Snagged Lift

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## What Happened / Narrative

During a routine lifting operation in the North Sea, the crane operator attempted to lift a heli-fuel tank which became snagged on a nearby container bridle. Both lifts remained suspended over the vessel's main deck for a period while the operator worked to free the snagged load and find a safe location to land both items. After several attempts, the crane operator was able to safely land the suspended load on deck, freeing the snag. The vessel deck crew implemented a 'clear deck and hands free' policy, remaining in a safe location throughout.

## Why Did it Happen / Cause

The exact moment when the bridle became snagged is unclear—whether it occurred during transit due to vessel movement or while the heli-tank was being hoisted. The heli-tank was positioned on the outside of the stow but was surrounded on three sides by other containers. The restricted line of sight may have prevented the vessel's deck crew from detecting the snag before the lift was initiated.

## Corrective Actions Taken / Recommendations

The risk of snagging within open-frame containers is well understood. While the deck cargo was initially stowed following established best practices, in hindsight, we recognize that retrieving one of the adjacent lifts first could have provided a clearer line of sight and potentially prevented the snag. Cherry picking is prohibited, and we must be prepared to maintain sufficient space on deck so that snagged lifts can be landed safely when something goes wrong. Moving forward, we encourage all personnel to remain mindful of this risk during loading and discharging operations. If there is any uncertainty regarding the presence of a hazard, we must always treat it as if it exists.

## Photographs / Supporting Information



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