

SAFETY ALERT



Safety Alert No. 414
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Contact: Jason Mathews
Phone: (504) 731-1496

Ship Allisions Result in Severe Damage to Fixed Facilities

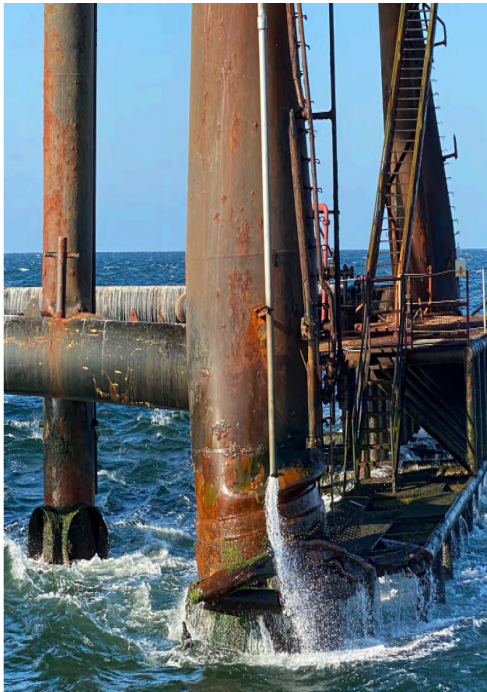


Figure 1: Damage from ship allision in October 2020

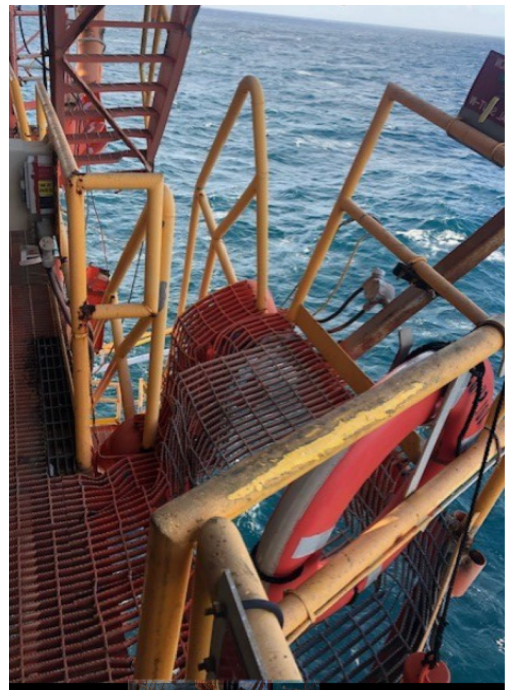


Figure 2: Damage from ship allision in January 2021

The South Pass area, like many areas of the Gulf of Mexico, is very near a shipping lane resulting in allisions and near misses. These allisions can cause extensive damage to platforms and structures in the GOM.

On October 17, 2020, at approximately 4:45 am, an oil tanker allision occurred with the north side of a shelf platform in the South Pass area. There was significant damage done to the platform, with extensive structural damage in the contact area (*figure 1*). There were no injuries or pollution associated with this incident.

On January 7, 2021, at approximately 2:00 am, an oil tanker allision into an unmanned shelf platform in the South Pass area. The platform sustained damage to egress routes and vent piping (*figure 2*). Initial indications were that the major structural members were spared damage; however, an underwater inspection will need to be conducted to confirm. There were no injuries or pollution associated with this incident. The damaged platform

was prepped for decommissioning.

These incidents are both under investigation; however, preliminary evidence suggested navigational aids that were accessible by Operators were operating as designed.

Therefore, BSEE recommends that Operators consider the following:

- Inspect all navigation aids on all manned and unmanned structures in the Gulf of Mexico to ensure proper functionality.
- Consider reviewing the frequency of inspection of navigation aids for structures located near to known shipping lanes.
- Operators should contact the US Coast Guard to complete and submit a Notice to Mariners when navigation aids are inoperable.
- For manned structures, consider developing a close ship protocol and conduct drills to deter and respond accordingly to an allision.
- At a minimum, Operators should audit their facilities for compliance with the following US Coast Guard requirements. More frequent maintenance and inspection may be warranted if the platform location is near a shipping lane.
 - 33 CFR 66 – Private aids to navigation;
 - 33 CFR 67.05 - General requirements for Lights;
 - 33 CFR 67.10 - General requirements for Sound Signals;
 - 33 CFR 143.15(a) - Lights and Warning Devices.
- Conduct a Level I survey after an allision to assess the severity of damages on the topsides portion of the platform resulting from the event.
- Conduct a Level II/III underwater survey after an allision to determine the condition of the structural members potentially impacted as a result of the event.

--BSEE--

A **Safety Alert** is a tool used by BSEE to inform the offshore oil and gas industry of the circumstances surrounding a potential safety issue. It also contains recommendations that could assist avoiding potential incidents on the Outer Continental Shelf.

Category: General, Other