

NOTICE TO AGENTS, BERTH AND SHIP OPERATORS No.8 of 2018

ILLEGAL AND DANGEROUS USE OF WEIGHTED HEAVING LINES

Masters and crews of vessels visiting the Thames are required to use properly constructed heaving lines for all mooring and towing operations. **The use of 'weighted' heaving lines is both prohibited and extremely dangerous**, and may cause serious injury or a fatality to those on the receiving end, either ashore or onboard a tug or mooring boat.

The MCA has issued a policy on reporting and management of inappropriately weighted heaving lines.

"To prevent personal injury to those receiving heaving lines, the 'monkey's fist' should be made with rope only and must not contain added weighting material. Safe alternatives include a small high-visibility soft pouch, filled with fast-draining pea shingle or similar, with a weight of not more than 0.5 kg. Under no circumstances is a line to be weighted by items such as shackles, bolts or nuts, or twist locks".

Guidance can also be found in the Code of Safe Working Practices for Merchant Seamen, Chapter 26.3.5

Masters of vessels and Agents are reminded that heaving lines with inappropriate weighting, such as pieces of metal, are **not to be used under any circumstances**. This dangerous practice is causing unacceptable risk to tug crews and shore mooring teams and appropriate enforcement action will be taken as necessary.

Shore mooring teams and tug crews have instructions to cut off weighted "monkeys fists" or any other added weights from heaving lines, where used. The weighted "fist" or added weight will be retained as evidence in the event of proceedings being taken against the vessel and/or individuals involved.

**7th November
2018**

Port of London Authority
London River House, Royal Pier Road,
Gravesend, Kent DA12 2BG

**BOB BAKER
CHIEF HARBOUR MASTER**



Owners, Agents and Charterers should ensure that the contents of this Notice are made known to the masters or persons in charge of their vessels or craft.
TO RECEIVE FUTURE NOTICES TO MARINERS BY **E-MAIL**,
PLEASE REGISTER VIA OUR WEBSITE www.pla.co.uk
Telephone calls, VHF radio traffic, CCTV and radar traffic images may be recorded in the VTS Centres at Gravesend and Woolwich

