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Technical notes of interest to Marine Engineers

Lifeboat accident provides sobering warning

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In Portland, Maine, in the United States, one Canadian, Nova Scotian, sailor died and two others were injured during a lifeboat drill. Much like confined space deaths, I am still awestruck how often these types of accidents are happening.

The U.S. coast guard report says a hook securing the lifeboat the men were in didn't lock properly and a warning device wasn't visible to the crew on board. The rig's lifeboat snapped its moorings as it was being hoisted aboard the rig.

"A lifeboat containing three workers was being lifted back to its stowed position aboard the oil rig, the Pride Rio de Janeiro, following a lifeboat drill when the boat's sternhook failed, dropping the lifeboat and the workers approximately 60 feet into the harbor.

"The workers should not have been in the lifeboat when it was being raised back to its stowed position," said C. William Freeman III, OSHA's area director for Maine. "OSHA standards prohibit it. Had proper safeguards been followed, they would not have been in the lifeboat after the drill and therefore not exposed to serious injury and death."



Two other hazards, not directly related to the accident, were also cited. They involved a Billy Pugh personnel carrier used to raise and lower employees to different levels of the rig. Specifically, no personal fall arrest systems were provided for workers riding in the personnel carrier and no one was operating a tag line on the rig's lower level to prevent the personnel carrier from swinging or swaying when being

used in windy conditions.

Cited for these hazards were Pride International, Inc., which employed the three workers, and Petrodrill Engineering, NV, the project's construction manager. Each was fined \$13,950 for three alleged serious violations of the Occupational Safety and Health Act. Pride International, Inc. faces an additional fine of \$100 for an alleged other than serious violation for not maintaining an illness and injury log."

Source: The US Occupational Health and Safety Agency
http://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_table=NEWS_RELEASES&p_id=10895

Below, in a US Maritime Administration (MARAD) press release , the scope of the rig project is explained. I understand that this project was a bit unusual, because the builder was actually not from a shipyard background; the builders were not involved in the accident.

"Portland's marine commercial shipbuilding industry has already gotten a boost thanks in part to construction of the "Pride Portland" and the "Pride Rio de Janeiro." Captain Schubert called the working waterfront an asset that will provide jobs and keep America moving. "This project is exactly what President Bush envisions when he speaks of revitalizing the economy and creating jobs for every American who wants to work."

The rigs are being constructed for Petrodrill, an international company based in the British Virgin Islands. Funded with assistance from the Maritime Administration, the oil rig is intended for oil exploration off the coast of South America. The "Pride Rio de Janeiro" has been completed and the "Pride Portland" is scheduled for completion later this year."

Source <http://www.dot.gov/affairs/marad0204.htm>



The USCG, following an investigation, have put out recommendations for the lifeboats and their hooks, you can view at the USCG's [website](#).

A visitor to Martin's Marine Engineering Page - www.dieselduck.net, contributed these pictures showing the damage to the lifeboat.











From the [Pride International](#) website...

"Innovation plays a crucial role in our success. The Pride Portland and Pride Rio de Janeiro are the latest additions to our fleet and incorporate the highly sophisticated Amethyst design, with the most advanced deepwater drilling technology for operations to 5,600 feet of water.

The Pride Portland and Pride Rio de Janeiro were brought to Maine in sections and were assembled at the Cianbro Corp. shipyard. Cianbro transported each rig's pontoon assembly and deck boxes to Portland, where workers welded each deck box and derrick onto the pontoons, essentially creating square-shaped ships about the size of a football field and 324 feet tall from the bottom of the pontoon to the tip of the derrick.

The Pride Rio de Janeiro, a modern deepwater drilling and pipe-handling semisubmersible, completed construction and underwent sea trials in March 2004. The rig has since been deployed to Brazil. The Pride Portland, the sister rig of the Pride

Rio de Janeiro deepwater drilling semisubmersible, completed construction and underwent sea trials in March 2004. The rig has since been deployed to Brazil."

The builders', Ciambro, project description [is here](#).



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