Floating Derrick Safety Fatality File

DERRICK ACCIDENT CAUSES FATALITY

A new ship was discharging steel plates with own cargo gear. While the derrick was lifting two steel plates slung together, the topping lift wire broke, and the plates fell. One stevedore was killed at the scene and three others were badly injured. The accident was attributed to a seizure of the centre pulley bearing, causing wear and breakage of the lifting wire due to contact with the pulley sheave. The shipowner had established a programme of routine maintenance, which the crew should have performed under the supervision of the chief officer. It would appear that this had not been done properly and the sheave, because of its position and accessibility, had been overlooked.

The additional wear and tear leading to the wire parting must have occurred over a period of time and should have been noticed by the crew. The faulty bearing was supplied by the shipbuilder; however the ship had been in service for about six months and the owner should have ensured that all equipment was checked and serviced regularly.

All wires, sheaves, gears and other moving parts must be checked and greased as soon as possible after delivery, and at regular intervals thereafter.