Factual information

On Sunday 22 December 2019, the tug Svitzer Mercurius was secured to the stern of CMA CGM Marco Polo for berthing at Southampton Container Terminal. As the containership approached the berth starboard side to, the pilot instructed Svitzer Mercurius’s master to provide 100% astern thrust. As Svitzer Mercurius’s master applied full thrust the tug’s towing winch brake began to slip and the pennant, securing the tug’s towline to the ship, parted.

The towline recoiled and struck the tug’s starboard forward wheelhouse window, shattering it. All of the crew in the wheelhouse were struck by flying glass. Fortunately, all the crew were wearing either sunglasses or spectacles, which prevented eye injuries. Some particles of glass also impacted with two aft wheelhouse windows, causing them to crack but not shatter.

The tug continued to assist with berthing CMA CGM Marco Polo by pushing on, before returning to its berth, where the crew disembarked and attended hospital. All injured crew were released the same day.

Investigation

The MAIB’s investigation has considered all aspects of the accident to determine the causes and circumstances, including the condition of the towline pennant that failed and the towing winch, the operation of the tug, and why the wheelhouse window glass shattered in such a manner.

The tug owner, Svitzer, has conducted its own investigation, which included a detailed examination of the parted pennant.

Ongoing action

The MAIB investigation is now complete and a draft of the report is being prepared. This will soon be distributed to stakeholders for a 30-day consultation period.
**SHIP PARTICULARS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Details</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vessel's name</td>
<td><em>Svitzer Mercurius</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flag</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classification society</td>
<td>DNV-GL</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMO number</td>
<td>9695523</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Tug (Class IX)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered owner</td>
<td>Svitzer Euromed B.V.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manager(s)</td>
<td>Svitzer (Middlesbrough)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>Steel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year of build</td>
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<tr>
<td>Length overall</td>
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<tr>
<td>Registered length</td>
<td>32.7m</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gross tonnage</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minimum safe manning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Authorised cargo</td>
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**VOYAGE PARTICULARS**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Port of departure</td>
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<td>Port of arrival</td>
<td>Southampton</td>
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<td>Type of voyage</td>
<td>Internal waters</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cargo information</td>
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<td>Manning</td>
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**MARINE CASUALTY INFORMATION**

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<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Date and time</td>
<td>22 December 2019, 1231</td>
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<tr>
<td>Type of marine casualty or incident</td>
<td>Less Serious Marine Casualty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Location of incident</td>
<td>Southampton Container Terminal, berth 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Place on board</td>
<td>Wheelhouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injuries/fatalities</td>
<td>Minor injuries to 5 crew</td>
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<tr>
<td>Damage/environmental impact</td>
<td>Failure of pennant line. Several wheelhouse windows damaged</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ship operation</td>
<td>Towing/pushing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voyage segment</td>
<td>Arrival</td>
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<tr>
<td>External &amp; internal environment</td>
<td>Calm bright conditions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Persons on board</td>
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