



ILA-USMX JOINT SAFETY COMMITTEE

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Bigger Ships; Potentially Bigger OSH Risks

As ocean carriers deploy larger and larger vessels and take advantage of the economies of scale that naturally accrue in transporting higher volumes of freight on each voyage, it's certainly smart to appreciate that bigger ships may present an increased risk of encountering proportionately larger on-the-job hazards for everyone involved.

For instance, over the last few months the global industry has become informed about two container crane knockdowns: one at Jebel Ali port in Dubai; one at Abidjan port in Ivory Coast. Here are hyperlinks that will provide access to information about both:

[Knockdown at Jebel Ali](#)

[Knockdown at Abidjan](#)

Bringing large containerships to berth and attaching lines is no longer the routine activity that it was when ships were of more modest proportions. The coordination required between the pilot, the tugs and the shipboard & shoreside line handlers is much more involved, much more complex; with much more at stake.

Making certain shoreside cranes are boomed up and have been gantried to their least vulnerable position is a great start. Keeping the docking area free of all but necessary personnel and equipment is also very important. Finally, making certain that bollards are not "over-lined" (too many lines secured to any one particular bollard) ensures that the added, substantial mass of each vessel does not provide the volume of energy that can literally rip the bollard(s) or cleat(s) right out of their dock mounting(s).

The ILA~USMX Joint Safety Committee advocates for greater coordination between ocean carriers, stevedoring firms, port authorities and longshore workers, so that the knowledge about when and how very large and ultra large container vessels must be brought to berth and secured is well communicated and well practiced.



Got a question about this particular subject? Write to the JSC at: blueoceana@optonline.net

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