

## Dangerously Weighted Heaving Lines

At Forth Ports, we operate a strict zero tolerance policy on the use of “weighted” heaving lines.

This practice is prohibited and extremely dangerous.

We ask that you carefully review the information provided regarding the dangers associated with weighted heaving lines and ensure that your vessel is not using them.

Please also incorporate the contents of this safety alert into a crew toolbox talk prior to mooring operations.

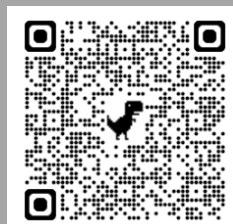
Open conversations onboard are essential to preventing unsafe practices and protecting everyone involved in mooring operations.

Let’s work together to ensure every operation is carried out safely — so everyone goes home safe, every day.



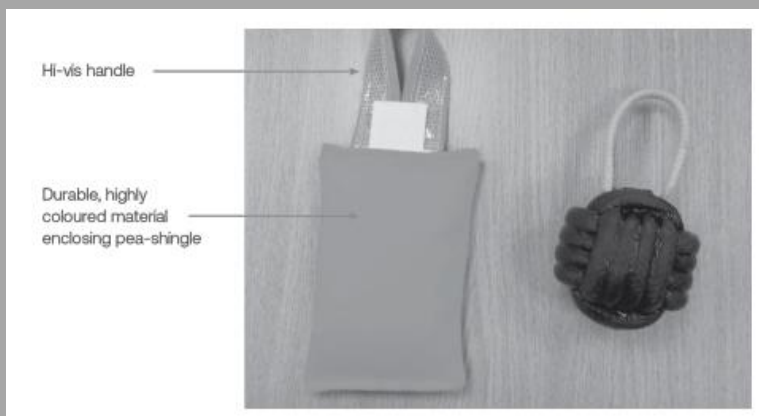
### The Code of Safe Working Practises for Merchant Seafarers

The Code of Safe Working Practices for Merchant Seafarers (COSWP) provides guidance on how to comply with UK legislation to the crews of vessels operating in UK waters. I have provided a QR code that will direct you to the GOV.UK website. For heaving lines refer to chapter 26.



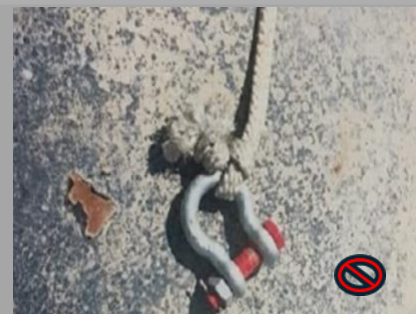
### What is permitted for use!

- A monkey's fist made from rope only and containing no added material.
- Safe alternative such as small high visibility soft pouch filled with pea shingle or similar with a weight no more than 0.5kg.



## What is a dangerously weighted heaving line?

- Any heaving line that is weighted with items such as shackles, bolts nuts etc
- Any heaving line that has been dipped and hardened in paint or varnish
- Any heaving line not made from rope or of soft material filled with pea shingle etc.



## Case Study

A Linesman tasked to moor a coaster was struck on the face by a weighted heaving line. The Linesman was required to visit A&E with facial fractures.

The heaving line was weighted with a purpose-built object weighing 450 grams. A small piece of steel was encapsulated in thick rubber and tied to the heaving line. Four of these objects were found on-board the vessel.

These purpose-built objects have been supplied as standard with the vessel, which was constructed in China in March 2025.

The heaving lines were all removed from the vessel and vessel was subsequently reported to the MCA.

## Investigation Findings

- The vessel's Master had never inspected the type of heaving lines being used by the crew.
- The crew were unaware that weighted heaving lines are prohibited.
- The crew incorrectly assumed the equipment was compliant because it was supplied during vessel construction.
- The black colour of the heaving lines reduced visibility during night operations.



## The consequences of using a weighted heaving line?

If a dangerously weighted heaving line is used at any port or facility within Forth Ports SHA, the heaving line will be immediately be cut and disposed of by the line handlers or tug crews.

In addition, a charge of £1,000 per occurrence will be applied.

All such incidents will also be reported to the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), who may take further enforcement action as deemed appropriate.