



Drydocking Problems

Drydocking is a complex activity. A superintendent has to interact with many stakeholders such as the yard, Class, repairer to ensure that the ship is upgraded and repaired within the planned cost and time. Every activity has to be meticulously planned, responsibilities assigned and followed up. A failure to do so can result in costly delays and damages as shown in the case studies below.

Case Study 1:

The following real-life case study shows how a seemingly simple purchase decision resulted in a costly delay.

Background -

A bulk carrier was in a floating drydock. The entire docking period was scheduled for 10 days and a list of jobs to be carried out was prepared. One of these jobs was the stern tube and tail-end shaft inspection and renewal of shaft seals. The stern tube seals were ordered and the suppliers promised delivery on the second day at the docks. It was also planned to dismantle the forward and aft seal assemblies on the same day.

Unfolding Events –

Due to some internal problems, the dismantling of the seal assemblies had to be rescheduled to the third day. Dismantling the forward seal gave rise to problems, and it took two extra days to remove the shaft. A clerical error was overlooked and the wrong type of seal was ordered. This was noticed only when the seal was opened for use. The existing seal could not be reused as it was damaged during dismantling. The correct type of seal could only be delivered in another 8 days. The correct type of seal was received a whole 3 days after the scheduled drydock period. The dock refused to extend the vessel's stay inside the docks. Hence the vessel was cold moved to lay berth with the stern blanked. The vessel was moved back into dock only after the next vessel had completed her docking, this was a 10 day wait. It took another day to fix the seals in drydock. The total time lost was 11 days.

What would you have done –

- (1) How would you have prevented such deviations from occurring? Explore the following options.
 - A. Double-check the indent from the vessel for part numbers.
 - B. Double-check the purchase order released by the Purchase Department for accuracy.
 - C. Maintain a complete set of spare seals on board at all times.
 - D. Make the Purchase order yourself for important parts based on indents received from the vessel.
 - E. Inspect the spare parts as soon as they are received onboard.

Feedback:

- A. Yes, you are correct. This should always be done.
- B. Although this can be done, it is redundant, because the purchase department processes the order only after the superintendent has approved it.
- C. This is impractical, as it is not cost beneficial. Also, some types of seals have to be maintained under controlled conditions. However, it is good practice to connect the spares just before drydocking.
- D. Although this option seems very enticing, it is impractical. The purchase department should do this job. If you take on this task too, you find it hard-pressed to focus on your own responsibilities.
- E. Although inspecting spare parts is a job for the ship's staff, it is advisable that you take on this role for important parts in order to avoid any chance of error.



Case Study 2:

Expecting the unexpected is often second nature for an experienced superintendent. The following case study shows how a planned inspection of a cargo pump went wrong due to inadequate risk analysis.

A screenshot of a digital case study interface. The title is "Damaged Cargo Pumps". Below the title are three tabs: "Background", "Unfolding Events", and "What would you have done?". The main content area has a light pink background and contains a lightbulb icon with the text "This case study has 3 sections". Below this, there are three sections: "Background: This section describes the background of the event.", "Unfolding Events: This section unfolds the wrong decisions or unfortunate events that led to accidents, loss of life, injuries, pollution, and loss of property.", and "What Would You Have Done?: This section asks how you would have prevented such deviations from occurring. You are presented with a list of options to explore the alternatives." At the bottom of the content area, it says "So, are you ready?". The interface includes a "Show text" button, a progress bar, and navigation controls (back, forward, refresh, search) at the bottom.