Title: Life boat releases during lifting operation
Location: Drilling unit offshore
Activity Type (Result/outcome): lifeboat fall Incident

What happened:

During heavy wind weather state a lifting operation to move steel plate was going on, one of the tag lines being used caught on the lifeboat release wire, releasing the gravity brake and allowing the boat to be lowered to the sea. The life boat did not disengage from the falls and was hoisted back up to the davits without loss.

What caused it:

- The hazard created by the high wind was not fully recognised.
- The potential to snag the life boat release wire had not been recognised during risk assessment.
- The textile covering on the upper body of tag line had become loose and retracted causing a snagging point to occur. This caught the release line and deactivated the life boat brake.
- The oil on the brake lining reduced the ability and efficiency of the brake to reset when the counter weight was reapplied.

Corrective actions:

- Take into account all conditions during the risk assessment (i.e. controls tag lines) to manage the steel plate lifting operation introduced other hazards in this event).
- It should be ensured that all tag lines are fit for purpose, and sufficient replacement stock is held on-board.
- Lifeboat maintenance procedure should be reviewed to ensure that the gravity brake is tested by use of the wire release and not by lifting the counter weight.

It is provided for information purpose. This information should be evaluated to determine if it is applicable in your operations, to avoid reoccurrence of such incidents.