

Event Brief



**Learning
From
Experience**

Review Learn Improve

Red = Urgent Action Required

Amber = Requires Attention

Green = For Information

CHAIN BLOCK FAILED ITS STATUTORY INSPECTION

Event Date: 07/06/11 Hinkley Point A Event Brief: EBHPA000037

Summary: Following the recent failure of BL9337 during its statutory inspection, the block was taken apart to establish the mode of failure. Photo 1 shows the pawl disengaged from the ratchet which will account for the block free running when a load was applied during the examination. The load which was applied was simply the Inspector pulling on the load chain.



Photo 1



Photo 2

The Pawl has since been removed and two further problems identified:-

1. The pawl has a number of tight spots when rotated in its working position
2. The pawl spring appears to be of a poor design because very little force is being applied to the pawl

Photo 2 shows the pawl and spring, the spring is in its relaxed position. The hook part of the spring which applies the force onto the pawl, when assembled only gives a few degrees of rotation. It is not possible to rotate the hook end of the spring to apply more force on the pawl because the coil section tightens on the pawl mounting post.

A second block BL9336 from the same batch has been removed from service. BL9336 is currently working correctly and will be stripped to reveal the pawl and spring. The spring will be removed and compared with the one on BL9337.

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BL9336 and 9337 were given a general visual check and it was noted the CE marking was not to standard – Photo 3. It appears the CE marking on both chain blocks is the one used for Chinese Export.



Photo 3



The issue of Chinese exporters using the CE logo incorrectly was raised at the EU parliament in 2008 and as far as I am aware is still not resolved.

BL9336 and BL9337 were purchased on the 11th December 1996 from Lloyds British. The certificate issued is a “Record of Test & Thorough Examination of Lifting Plant & Equipment” which carries a Declaration/EC Declaration of Conformity statement. Certificates from more recently purchased Vital chain blocks carry the following statement. “*The equipment has been marked to indicate that it complies with the European Machinery Directive and an EC Declaration of Conformity has been issued which is held within our Company*”. Copies of these Declarations have not been supplied.

Hinkley 'A' has 13 Lloyds Vital Chain Blocks of various sizes, all are in the process of being removed from service until further notice.

On the Lloyds British web site they quote the Vital range as an exclusive to them. The Vital range is manufactured by “VITAL CHAIN BLOCK MFG CO. LTD” who appear to be based in Japan however, further internet searching indicates the equipment is manufactured in China.

Vital Chain Block Mfg. Co. Ltd.	
Address	: 2-9, Yasuda 2-chome, Tsurumi-ku
City	: Osaka-shi
State	: Osaka
Zip	: 538-0032
Country	: Japan
Phone	: (06)6911-2241
Fax	: (06)6912-0822
Business Detail	

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Business Type	: Manufacturers
Products	: Machinery Conveying