

SAFETY ALERT



Safety Alert No. 440

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Contact: bseepublicaffairs@bsee.gov

Phone: (800) 200-4853

Reducing incidents through increasing training and supervision of Short Service Employees



Green hard hats and SSE stickers can be used to identify Short Service Employees

Since the beginning of 2022, BSEE has seen a significant trend in reported incidents with causes or contributing factors that point to Short Service Employees. Standard definitions of a SSE are an employee who has worked at the facility for less than six months, worked in the industry for less than six months, or recently changed positions. Some period of on-the-job training or mentorship is required.

The incidents include but are not limited to the following:

- An SSE was injured during a maintenance operation on rotating equipment. The SSE placed his hand on the belt connecting the electric motor to the repaired pump.

The SSE subsequently started the electric motor before removing his hand. The belt guard had been removed during the repair. The post-incident investigation findings cited major factors as lack of knowledge and experience and inadequate work planning or training in the field.

- During an offshore inspection, platform leadership informed BSEE inspectors that "they are at max capacity of SSEs and cannot afford to lose any experienced personnel."
- Deepwater production facility personnel reported to BSEE that they had experienced a 40% personnel turnover during annual performance reviews in the past two years.
- An SSE was injured on the rig floor during tool running operations. The SSE placed his hand between a bushing and the running tool, and when the bushing was released, it dropped and injured his hand. The post-investigation report found that the SSE used improper hand placement and failed to utilize hands-free tools. This was the SSE's second time working as a rig floor support staff.
- During a BSEE inspection at a facility, inspectors noted that the employees present were not familiar with safety device testing requirements, nor could they perform the necessary safety system testing. The inspectors also pointed out that the employees were new to the platform. BSEE inspectors issued an incident of noncompliance (INC) at the facility.

Like many other industries, the offshore oil and gas industry has experienced a tremendous upheaval/disorder in the workforce due to COVID-19 and other related factors, with more new personnel working on facilities and more frequent transfers between facilities. However, the complexities and imminent dangers faced by offshore energy industry workers have not changed or dissipated.

Therefore, BSEE recommends that operators consider:

- Adequately training and mentoring SSEs. Training should include, but is not limited to, hazard identification and specific job hazard mitigation. Zone awareness training, including hands-on drills, should be mandatory for SSE rig floor workers. All SSEs should have some form of assessment at the appropriate time in their SSE period to evaluate and address any gaps in knowledge.
- Establishing a program or policy that trains and prepares experienced employees to become mentors for SSEs entering the workforce or work location. The program

should include hazard identification and risk management training as well as leadership training.

- Sending SSEs to hands-on training classes, whether in well operations or production operations instead of courses that primarily rely on classroom discussion. The suggested alternative courses include a replica rig with a drilling floor in well operations or a replica production train for production operations. The typical hazards that an SSE will/may see offshore can be identified hands-on (including visually and audibly) instead of courses relying solely on pictures and classroom discussions.
- Assessing SSE training and competency before arrival offshore. Upon arrival, the SSE should be assigned a qualified mentor. The qualifications and hazards local to the job scope and the facility should be extensively reviewed and discussed to increase understanding before commencing work.
- Establishing a policy for the maximum SSE percentage allowed for the personnel on board a facility.
- Establishing a policy for the maximum SSE percentage allowed for personnel on a specific job.
- Evaluating the SSE workload and competencies until expertise is fully assessed and evaluated. Understanding that personnel gain knowledge with experience. SSE involvement in specific high-risk jobs should be evaluated based on all risk factors.
- Never leaving an SSE alone to perform a task or job.

– BSEE –

A **Safety Alert** is a tool used by BSEE to inform the offshore oil and gas industry of the circumstances surrounding a potential safety issue. It also contains recommendations that could assist avoiding potential incidents on the Outer Continental Shelf.

Category: Short Service Employees