

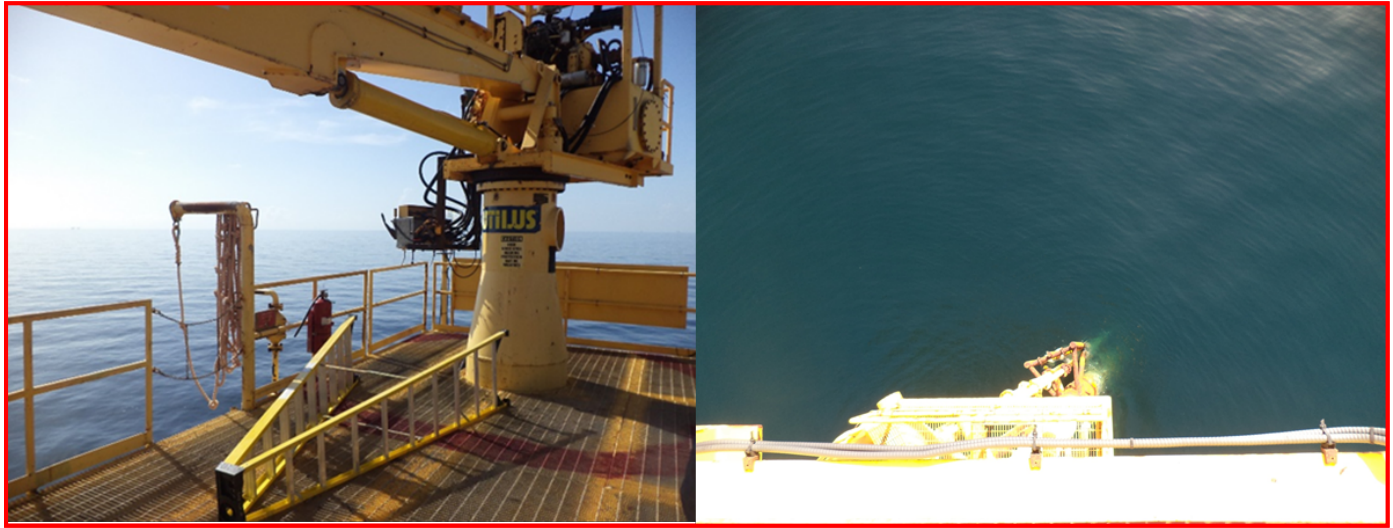
SAFETY ALERT



Safety Alert No. 343
19 November 2018

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Worker Falls from Height into Water



Location of crane mechanic at the time of the incident (left) and view over the handrail (right)

On 7 July 2018, a contract crane mechanic (CCM) fell 81 feet into the water below as he was replacing the platform crane's anti-two block control valve. A 10-ft ladder had been positioned between the overboard handrail and the crane for the CCM's use. As the CCM was positioned on the crane skid located seven feet above the deck, he realized that he needed to descend the ladder to retrieve additional tools. As the CCM repositioned himself onto the ladder in order to descend, he either lost his grip or his footing, which caused him to fall backwards over the handrail and into the water.

High winds prevented the CCM from retrieving a life vest initially thrown to him, but later he was able to retrieve a vest that had been placed in a life ring. Strong currents then caused him to drift further from the platform. Approximately 45 minutes after the incident began, a fishing vessel rescued the CCM and transported him back to the platform. The CCM was then flown onshore for treatment and was diagnosed with fractures of cervical and lumbar vertebrae.

The safe work practices in effect at the time of the incident required the CCM to use fall protection for heights that exceed six feet above the deck. Additionally, Coast Guard Regulation 33 CFR 146.20 requires the wearing of work vests when working near or over water. The CCM was using neither item, nor did the JSA identify falling as a potential hazard that necessitated mitigation.

Therefore, BSEE recommends that operators consider the following:

- Review this Safety Alert with all offshore personnel.
- Ensure procedures are implemented that establish minimum requirements for working at unguarded, elevated work locations that are six feet or greater above floor/grade level or that present a potential for fall and/or injury to personnel.
- Verify company and contract personnel working at heights near or above water are knowledgeable and experienced in the work practices necessary to perform their job in a safe and environmentally sound manner.
- Review job pre-planning procedures to ensure response plans, fall rescue plans, emergency response numbers, and fast response craft are included if necessary.
- Consider equipment position and hazards when completing job pre-planning in order to minimize risk.
- For more information, consult the [Accident Investigation Report](https://www.bsee.gov/sites/bsee.gov/files/sm105-fieldwood-07jul2018.pdf) (https://www.bsee.gov/sites/bsee.gov/files/sm105-fieldwood-07jul2018.pdf)

A **Safety Alert** is a tool used by BSEE to inform the offshore oil and gas industry of the circumstances surrounding an accident or near miss. It also contains recommendations that should help prevent the recurrence of such an incident on the Outer Continental Shelf.