



Safety Alert

From the International Association of Drilling Contractors

ALERT 00-14

NEAR FATAL INJURY WHEN PIPE DROPPED FROM ELEVATORS

WHAT HAPPENED:

Several incidents have occurred where 2-7/8" drill pipe or 2-7/8" pup joints have slipped from fully latched tapered insert type single joint elevators. Recently a crewman received near-fatal injuries when a pup joint that fell 25 feet (7.6m) struck him.

WHAT CAUSED IT:

It was found that the pup joint box end tool joint was 3-1/8", which was insufficient to prevent the pipe from slipping through the elevator. Previous to this, the elevator had been used to pick up 700 joints of drill pipe without incident. The box end tool joint of the pipe was ordered with a tool joint specification of 3-3/8". No specification was given for the pup joint. A sufficient upset to the tool joint is required to set prevent pipe slipping through the elevator.

NOTE: If the tool joints of the 2 7/8" drill pipe were to wear down from 3-3/8" to 3-1/8" while down hole, a similar incident could be possible.

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS:

- Ensure that the working tolerance of the elevator is suitable for lifting pipe of given outside diameter tool joint and degree of upset to the tool joint;
- Note that variations in the above dimensions due to manufacture or wear may cause individual joint of pipe to slip through these elevators;
- Specify the use of other precautions, such as a lift nubbin, should they be required in order to handle the tubular safely;
- Ensure that the all-single joint elevators are included in an appropriate maintenance schedule.
- Inspection should include all small internal parts such as retaining pins, springs and tapered insert dies.

The Corrective Actions stated in this alert are one company's attempts to address the incident, and do not necessarily reflect the position of IADC or the IADC HSE Committee.

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