



Safety Alert

From the International Association of Drilling Contractors

ALERT 06 – 27

POOR COMMUNICATIONS RESULTS IN PIPE BEING PULLED IN TWO

WHAT HAPPENED:

A drilling crew had finished bull heading 3-1/2 barrels of mud down the annulus of the well and the pressure was bled through the choke and was reading zero. The normal procedure would have been to close the annular during bull heading operation, but this time the top rams were closed. A tour change occurred and the driller, who just came on tour, opened the annular preventer and attempted to hoist the 2-7/8" drill pipe to pull out of the hole. A tool joint came up against the closed top pipe rams and the pipe parted at the rig floor. There were no injuries and a fishing job was not necessary given that the severed tool joint was still above the rig floor.

WHAT CAUSED IT:

There was an obvious lack of communication at the tour change. Hand-over notes are designed as a barrier to prevent errors in operations. The company hand-over form was in use at the time of this incident; however, the notes were either incomplete or ignored. It's essential to the safety of the whole operation for the hand-over notes to be used correctly.

Another standard operating procedure (and also a barrier to prevent errors) is the use of a sign placed on the driller's weight indicator stating which BOP is closed. The sign had been placed on the clutch handle instead. This placement put the sign below the line of sight and made it difficult to read as a result of the angle of the sign.

A third barrier designed to alert the driller as to which BOP is in use, are the indicator lights on the remote control console. No indicator lights existed at the remote panel.

Were people in too much of a hurry to confirm which BOP equipment was in use? Did they assume that things were done as normal and that the possibility of change didn't exist?

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS: To address this incident, this company instructed the personnel in the following:

- Fabricate the necessary signs indicating which BOP equipment is closed and place them on the weight indicator for best results!
- BOP Ram indicator lights are to be added to decrease the likelihood of this kind of incident in the future.
- **Regardless of what information is passed from one driller to the next in the hand-over notes, it is the on-tour driller's responsibility to verify what the status is of all equipment/operations. When a different driller takes control of the operation, he owns the operation. Don't rely on someone giving you all the right information; verify it for yourself.**

Good communication is essential to a safe operation. When you take over responsibility, check and verify—the operation and all that goes with it now belongs to you!

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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