Safety Alert

From the International Association of Drilling Contractors

ALERT 08 – 01

WORKING WITH ROTATING CONTROL DEVICES

WHAT HAPPENED:

Incident #1 - The rotating control device (RCD) was leaking so the driller sent an employee to open the clamp on it. When the driller used the drawworks to hoist the pipe and pull the rotating control device from the bowl, the gasket was pulled out. The employee was attempting to replace the gasket when the rotating control device slid down the pipe smashing his hand between it and the bowl **severely** injuring the employee's hand.
Incident #2 - The spinning chain was being used to spin up the joint of pipe that had the RCD on it. As the pipe was turned up, the RCD slid down the pipe and smashed the employee's thumb between it and the spinning chain.
Incident #3 - The crew was installing the RCD on 4 ½ inch casing. The RCD slid down the pipe and smashed the employee's finger between it and the casing slips.
Incident #4 - Crew was nippling up the RCD to the BOP stack. As the control device was lowered the injured employee's finger was smashed between it and one of the studs.

WHAT CAUSED IT:

Incident #1 - The driller assumed the employee was clear of the rotating control device and pulled the control device through the floor. There was a lack of communication between the injured and the driller.
Incident #2 & #3 – There was no efforts made to secure the rotating control device to prevent it from sliding down the drill pipe as it was turned up.
Incident #4 – There was a lack of communication between the men on the rig floor and the personnel working below the rotary table.

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS: To address this incident, this company did the following:

Incident #1
- Driller shall ensure all crewmembers are clear before engaging the drawworks to hoist the pipe.
- Using the sling provided by the RCD rental company, rig crews are to attach the air hoist to the rotating control device before pulling it through the floor.
- Instruct employees to wait until the bushings are back in the table before working under the rotary table.

Incidents #2 & #3
- The stand of pipe with the rotating control device shall be "walked-in" using chain tongs. Do not use the spinning chain or pipe spinners to makeup this stand.
- Keep the rotating control device as close to the lower tool joint as possible.
- Secure the RCD with the air hoist prior to pulling the slips.

Incident #4
- Maintain good communication between the personnel on the rig floor and personnel working below the rotary table.
- Use flagmen, spotters or other means of communication to ensure all personnel are aware of where and when the equipment is to be moved.

Other Considerations When Working With the Rotating Control Device

- Conduct a pre-job safety meeting before starting a project. Ensure all employees know what and how it is to be done.
- All rigs should write or review a JSA for this job. Ensure all employees who are not familiar with the operation review the JSA before starting the project.

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.

Issued January 2008

- Since the least experienced crew member is usually the man sent to conduct work below the rotary table, **strong consideration** should be given to sending a more experienced employee. If an inexperienced crew member must be used **it is critical** the employee understands **exactly** what is to be done and how to do it safely. Quiz the employee to ensure **ALL** aspects of the task are understood.
- Always wear proper fall protection while working in an elevated work site.
- Ensure all employees working under the rotary table are aware of the potential for some types of fall protection to become entangled in the rotating equipment.

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Issued January 2008