Safety Alert

From the International Association of Drilling Contractors

ALERT 09 – 15

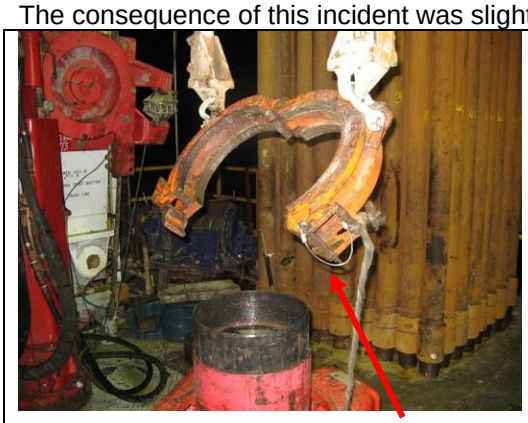
NEAR MISS – DROPPED CASING WHEN ELEVATORS NOT LATCHED CORRECTLY

WHAT HAPPENED:

A joint of 13 3/8 inch casing fell down the v-door and continued off the catwalk when the Single Joint Casing Elevators (SJE) were not latched and pinned correctly. The incident occurred on the 60th joint of casing being run. A check of the SJE after the incident verified that the elevators DID NOT FAIL and that the cause of the incident was induced by human error. The investigation team established that the SJE were only partially latched. This left enough room to insert the pin behind the latching device instead of in its proper position in front of the latching device and acting as a retaining safety pin. The safety retainer pin was still inserted after the incident. The latcher on the rig floor did not know the elevators were not fully latched.

With the winch line and sling removed from the joint of casing the driller was signaled to pick up the casing. When the weight was taken up on the SJE under the collar of the casing the SJE opened and the casing fell out and eventually came to rest against the wire line unit off the catwalk.

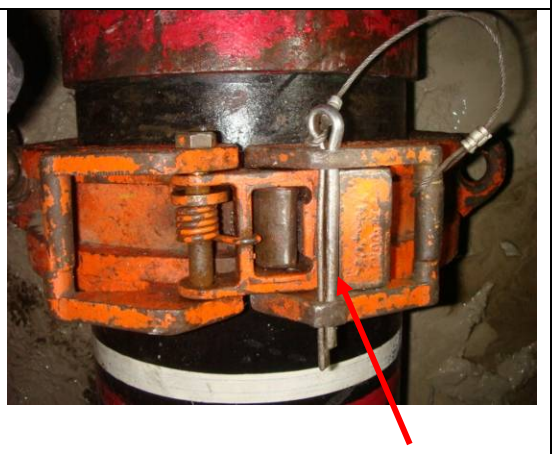
The consequence of this incident was slight damage to the wire line unit with the potential for a fatality.



Elevators after the incident. Note the safety pin still in the elevators.

Recreation: Note the latch partially closed with pin incorrectly inserted.

Location of the casing after the incident.



Correct latching and pinning of elevators. Note pin outside elevator latch.

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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WHAT CAUSED IT:

- The driller was not able to see the casing on the v-door or the elevators from the drillers console. His vision was obstructed by four stands of 8 inch Bottom Hole Assembly (BHA) and four rows of drill pipe, which was stacked in the drillers side of the fingers because the off driller side was full of drill pipe. The driller relied on “thumbs up” to pick up on the blocks.
- It is not possible for the latch to open on the SJE if latched and pinned correctly. It is possible to not fully latch the SJE allowing sufficient room to insert the retainer pin behind the latch.
- There was no second person assigned to check if the SJE were latched and pinned correctly.
- The JSA, which was reviewed prior to commencement of the job, was a generic JSA and made no reference to the hazard of the elevators not latching or the requirement for a second checker.
- The rig was not equipped with any form of secondary safety device (i.e. stopper bar at the base of the v-door) to prevent casing etc. from sliding down the v-door through the catwalk as it did in this case.

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

- Single Joint Elevators were changed out for a type considered to have a better latching device (i.e. pin inserted through latch).
- Procedures to be reviewed and amended so that
  - A second person is assigned to double check the elevator is latched correctly and the pin is inserted correctly.
  - Driller must have a clear view to the v-door at all times. Where racking pipe in the fingers will prevent this the pipe should be racked differently to allow a clear view or they should be laid out sideways when this is not achievable.
- A rig specific JSA is to be developed which outlines all the potential hazards identified in the investigation report.
- A stopper device design is to be agreed by Management which, when fabricated and fitted, will prevent pipe or casing travelling down the catwalk uncontrollably if there was any future elevator failure or human error.

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