



# Safety Alert

From the International Association of Drilling Contractors

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ALERT 04 – 02

## FALL RESULTS IN SERIOUS INJURY

### WHAT HAPPENED:

The injured party (IP), a scaffolding foreman, and another scaffolder were working on the skid beam on a platform. They were to remove two temporary sea fastenings. The work was originally planned as a job for the hook-up and commissioning contractor with the scaffolders on a call-out to build scaffolding to allow the commissioning contractor to carry out the job from a fixed platform. After the IP visited the site, he assessed that the scaffolders could do the job using harnesses instead of building scaffolding for the commissioning crew (the building of this would also require the use of harnesses). He agreed this change with the construction supervisor but there was no follow-up conversation with the permit authorities. The first job was carried out successfully. During the second job, one of the bolts was tight and the IP asked for a second spanner wrench. During this operation one of the spanners slipped and the IP lost his balance and fell backwards into the opening to the platform deck 13.5m (45 feet) below, hitting an inclined support beam on the way down which partially broke his fall. Actual outcome: Fractured pelvis with a high potential for a fatality.

### WHAT CAUSED IT:

- At some stage prior to or during the second job, the IP did not secure his safety line.
- There was noncompliance with the requirements for working at heights and permit to work directive.
- Four other personnel observed the job but no one checked whether the IP had attached his safety line and no one stopped the job.
- Control of work. There was insufficient control of work on the platform caused by a lack of focus and adherence to the structure, application and audit of the Permit to Work system.
- Management of change. The installation of the platform alongside an existing facility involved a significant ramp up in activity. Additional processes were put in place to mitigate this risk but these were not adequate.

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

- Compliance with working at heights and permit to work to be improved through systematic verification of the quality of work permits and knowledge of Directives.
- Safety expectations to be reinforced for all personnel involved in the installation, with focus on zero tolerance for non-compliance with safety rules and platform standards, and personal responsibility to stop work that is unsafe.
- Structure and operation of the Permit to Work system on the project to be improved to provide better control of work.
- Job description to be developed for the Area Authority role on the platform.
- **Key Messages:**
  - Rules must be followed
  - Everyone has an obligation to stop work that is unsafe.
  - Consult the permit authorities if a job changes, no matter how small the change.
  - Never underestimate the need to ensure the controls that have been put in place to control work are actually working.

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**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.**