

Fatality: Fall from height in shipyard

Safety Flash Published on 31 January 2006 Generated on 14 January 2025 IMCA SF 01/06

IMCA has received a report of an incident wherein a worker lost his life falling from height.

What happened?

The incident occurred onboard a vessel in a shipyard whilst a worker was lifting an elbow pipe to dismantle it from a pipeline. A lifting lug, which was used to rig the pipe, gave way and struck the worker, causing him to fall from a height of about 7 metres. The worker was taken to hospital, but subsequently died of his injuries.

The accident could have been prevented had safe work procedures been used, such as a pre-lift toolbox meeting including discussion of rigging methods to be used in lifting the elbow pipe. The use of appropriate fall restraint equipment could also have assisted in preventing the fall.

This incident highlights the following lessons to be learnt:

- workers should be properly trained and able to comprehend the hazards of their work, particularly when lifting is involved.
- appropriate safety equipment – in this case, fall restraints – should always be used.
- companies need to ensure adequate procedures are in place and followed to prevent accidents, including risk assessments and toolbox meetings.

IMCA Safety Flashes summarise key safety matters and incidents, allowing lessons to be more easily learnt for the benefit of the entire offshore industry.

The effectiveness of the IMCA Safety Flash system depends on the industry sharing information and so avoiding repeat incidents. Incidents are classified according to IOGP's Life Saving Rules.

All information is anonymised or sanitised, as appropriate, and warnings for graphic content included where possible.

IMCA makes every effort to ensure both the accuracy and reliability of the information shared, but is not be liable for any guidance and/or recommendation and/or statement herein contained.

The information contained in this document does not fulfil or replace any individual's or Member's legal, regulatory or other duties or obligations in respect of their operations. Individuals and Members remain solely responsible for the safe, lawful and proper conduct of their operations.

Share your safety incidents with [IMCA online](#). Sign-up to receive Safety Flashes [straight to your email](#).

