Fatal fall in shipyard

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IMCA has received a report on a fatal accident in a shipyard, in which one worker was killed and another was saved by his safety harness.

What happened?

The two workers were constructing cable hangers using steel pipes onboard a ship in the yard. The cable hangers were intended for the laying of service lines, such as electrical cables and compressed air hoses. The two workers were standing on the ship's railings and constructing a cable hanger when the cable hanger tilted. They lost their balance and fell off the ship. One worker's life was saved by his safety harness which was secured. The other worker fell some 27 metres to his death at the bottom of the dry dock. He was wearing his safety harness but had not secured it.

This is a fundamental lesson in the proper use of personal protective equipment (PPE) which has tragically cost someone his life. It is not enough merely to wear PPE – you must actively use it and make it work for you to make your job safer.

Everyone needs to be vigilant by looking out for unsafe work practices and ensuring that all safety rules and regulations are strictly adhered to – rules are there for a purpose. Extra care should be taken to ensure that proper risk management is in place and that safe work procedures to prevent accidents are developed, implemented and complied with.

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.

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