

UK HSE: worker falls from height during oil platform decommissioning

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The UK Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has prosecuted a civil engineering company after a worker suffered life threatening injuries after falling 15 metres when a platform he was working on unexpectedly collapsed.

What happened?

A worker was involved in the dismantling of the Brent Bravo platform in the North Sea. The incident occurred during the removal of a module located on the North West corner of the platform. In planning for the removal of the module, it was noted that there were three platforms on the cellar deck of the structure that would need to be moved to allow the module to fall safely.

It was **not recognised by the planning team** that one of the platforms did not form part of the main structure and was attached to the platform using bolts that had corroded over time. This affected the structural integrity of the platform and the methodology required to remove it safely. During the cutting of bracing beams, the platform unexpectedly collapsed causing one of the employees to fall 15 metres.



What went wrong?

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) into the incident found that the company had failed to carry out a full structural appraisal of the platform

IOGP Life Saving Rules:



Bypassing safety controls



Working at height

prior to demolition. This would have informed the risk assessment and method statement being used by the cutting crew at the time of the incident to ensure that the work could have been carried out safely.

The inspector said: *“When undertaking demolition work where structures are being left in a pre-weakened state, it is essential for those in control of the work to take appropriate measures to ensure the safety of all those involved with the work. This includes ensuring that consideration is given to the stability of structures before and during demolition work, as well as ensuring that control measures are in place to mitigate other associated health and safety risks such as work at height.”*

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