Serious dropped object incidents

Safety Flash Published on **16 June 2014** Generated on **28 January 2026** IMCA SF 09/14

A Member has reported two serious dropped object incidents. In the first, an object weighing 100 kg was dropped 2.4 m. In the second, an object weighing 15.3 kg fell 20 m, struck a worker on the head and shoulders and caused a first aid injury.

Incident 1:

During a 'routine' change out of the HOM (Hang Off Module) pads, a pad weighing 100kg was dropped 2.4m. The pad landed on the portable access steps on which the operations technician was stood. The impact caused damage to the steps and caused the technician to lose his balance and fall over.

Our member's investigation revealed the following:

- The female thread in the HOM pad assembly was corroded.
- Due to its location the corrosion was not readily identifiable at the time the eye bolt was fitted.
- Owing to the eyebolt having to pass through a lifting bracket the effective thread was reduced by 10mm.

Swipe to see next image

Our member took the following actions:

- Redesign of the lifting device – three threaded bolts now used to secure the lifting brackets in position.
- Weld type pad eyes will be fitted to all HOM pad lifting brackets.
- All tapped holes to be checked and re-drilled and tapped the next size up if found to be worn.
- Once all sizes are established, stainless steel grub screws will be purchased and will be greased and fitted to all tapped lifting holes on HOM pads to help eliminate corrosion.

Incident 2:

On a pipelay vessel, a side roller guide for the track chains fell from the upper tensioner onto the protection roof of the lower workstation, before administering a glancing blow to a rigger, resulting in first aid treatment. The object weighed 15.3kg

and fell 20m.

Swipe to see next image

Our member’s investigation revealed the following:

- The retaining bolts on the bearing rail had been sheared.
- The upper section had only one bolt in place.

All members are encouraged to check carefully all equipment used at height for:

- Corrosion.
- Insufficient security of bolts and tensioners.

These incidents highlight the need for constant vigilance for dropped objects. The re-occurrence of dropped object incidents is evidence that dropped objects are still harming and have the potential to kill. IMCA member’s have reported a number of dropped object incidents already this year.

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.