

High potential near miss: Dropped Paraguard stretcher during drill

Safety Flash Published on 13 November 2023 Generated on 23 January 2025 IMCA SF 26/23

During a rescue from height /evacuation drill within the top of the main crane pedestal, a Paraguard stretcher (12 kg) slipped out from the dummy and fell approx. 50 m to the crane winch room below.

What happened?

The incident occurred just as the descent was starting. The area below the drill was a restricted access area; there were no injuries.

What went wrong?

For the first transfer through the top hatch, using the tripod, the lifting point on the stretcher itself was correctly used. However, after the transfer to the descending davit, the descending cable was attached to the Dummy harness, *not* to the stretcher lifting point.

This led to the stretcher and dummy not being secured to each other, and the stretcher slipping during the descent.



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Our member noted the following:

- The rescue plan was too generic and did not address specifically the process by which the injured person in a stretcher would be lowered.
- Despite the presence of several rescue team members, nobody noticed that the rope was connected to the wrong attachment point.

Lessons learned and actions

- Rescue teams ought to be familiar with the stretchers used on board, and follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Rescue plans should be specific and contain detailed information related to the equipment used (Stretcher, Tripod, Davit) and the descent/lowering process, load transfers and connections. The Plan should be reviewed at the toolbox talk before the drill, and this should include as much as possible hands-on practice with the specific stretcher.
- The Potential DROPS area below the area where the drill is occurring should be barricaded, marked, and vacated during the descent. Special attention may be required to ensure that the medical team stood by, are kept outside of the potential line of fire.
- Review the rescue plan in this case to
 - Ensure that suitable rescue equipment is used (if space is limited, the use of a stretcher can pose additional hazards and use of a harness may be an acceptable alternative);
 - Incorporate more specific details on the process of lowering the casualty.

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