

SAFETY ALERT



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Personnel Transfers by Swing Rope and Personnel Basket



BSEE inspector's photograph of swing rope in place on a Gulf of Mexico facility

During a January 2018 swing rope transfer in the Gulf of Mexico, a contract operator was unable to successfully complete the landing to the platform from a boat and ultimately fell into the water. The contract operator was quickly recovered by the motor vessel crew and was immediately transported back to the manned facility. The injured contract operator was diagnosed with a torn ligament in his elbow that required surgery to repair.

As a result of this incident, BSEE revisited 2017 incident data to determine the frequency of personnel transfer incidents. In 2017, there were multiple personnel transfer incidents reported to BSEE. The following are some examples of incidents that occurred in 2017:

- Personnel were transferring to a boat, as the personnel basket landed on the boat and personnel began to get off, a wave shifted the boat causing slack in the rigging, which resulted in the top section of the basket striking a contractor.
- During transfer, the personnel basket made contact with the vessel's deck partially collapsing the basket. In doing so, an individual fell on his right side onto the deck injuring him.
- Three personnel were being transferred from a motor vessel to a derrick barge. When the basket was lifted off the deck to the supply boat, the crane block was off

center of the basket causing it to swing and contact the bullwark. One employee fell off the basket from a height of approximately 2 feet and landed flat on his back.

- A contract operator fell into the water during swing rope transfer between boat landing deck and vessel. The injured party was diagnosed with abrasions to the left leg and a strain to his lower back.
- While lifting the personnel basket from the deck, it swung into the side of the boat, and three people were injured.
- While transferring from a platform to a boat via a swing rope, an employee hit his knee on the top of the stern bulwarks

The review of these incidents identified common contributing factors – fitness for duty for individuals conducting swing rope transfers; inadequate training and poor judgement; techniques (poor grip, mistimed swing, etc.); and weather factors.

Due to the frequency of personnel transfer events and the potential consequences, BSEE recommends that operators consider the following options:

- Review this Safety Alert with all personnel who transfer to facilities via swing rope or personnel baskets in order to acknowledge all potential hazards with personnel transfers
- Prior to any personnel transfer, inspect and test all hardware associated with the operation and develop a protocol to report any deficiencies to the Person in Charge of the facility
- Stress the significance of patience, weather and sea conditions, and the use of Stop Work Authority
- Consider developing fitness for duty requirements for personnel involved in transfers

A **Safety Alert** is a tool used by BSEE to inform the offshore oil and gas industry of the circumstances surrounding an accident or near miss. It also contains recommendations that should help prevent the recurrence of such an incident on the Outer Continental Shelf.