



**U.S. Department of the Interior  
Minerals Management Service  
Gulf of Mexico OCS Region**

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### **Fall Results in Fatality**

Recently, a contract drilling company employee, while being lifted to the derrick's stabbing board, fell approximately 80 feet to his death when both of his body harness D-rings became detached from the hoisting system's hook. The hook involved contains an outward opening, self-locking latch and a latch release trigger. The body harness is a dual D-ring harness with a boatswain's chair. There was no personal fall-arrest system being used at the time of the accident.

Although the accident is currently under investigation by MMS, with an official report to be issued shortly, the above facts and the potential for similar occurrences have prompted this alert.

Recommendations with respect to personnel lifting operations are as follows:

- All personnel lifting hooks should be a snaphook design with an inward moving, self-closing, and self-locking keeper (latch or gate), that is, the keeper remains closed and locked until unlocked and pressed open for connection or disconnection.
- An employee on a single-point suspension-lifting device (as described above) should be protected by a personal fall-arrest system when working at elevations greater than six feet above the working deck. The anchorages involved in such a fall-arrest system should be independent of the lifting device's suspension. For example, the personal fall-arrest system should consist of either (a) a lanyard from the person to an independent lifeline, that is, not to any part of the lifting suspension line, or (b) an independent self-retracting lifeline connected to the person.
- All operators should review their personnel lifting operations for safety considerations. To aid in that review, your attention is directed to OSHA regulations 29 CFR 1926 Subpart L (Parts 1926.450 – 1926.454) – Scaffolds and 29 CFR 1926 Subpart M (Parts 1926.500 – 1926.503) – Fall Protection.

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