MMS Safety Alert

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Gulf of Mexico OCS Region

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OCS Operations Safety Alert

Fatality -- Crane Accident

Another fatal accident involving crane operations recently occurred on an offshore drilling rig.

An employee was acting as flagman for the crane operator because the end of the boom was not visible from the cab with the boom in a raised position. The employee did not signal the crane operator to stop the crane; instead, he bent over and started tying the sling to material on deck. When the employee stooped over, the crane operator stopped booming down, however, not soon enough. The operating port side crane struck the boom of the starboard crane which had not been placed in its cradle. As a result of the collision, the load limit switch box for the whip line was torn loose from the port side crane boom. The box fell, striking the employee on the back of the head and shoulders.

To prevent a recurrence of a similar incident, the operator has taken the following actions:

1. The load limit switch box on each of the cranes has been welded to the boom as well as being held by bolts.

2. A cable has been connected to the box and to the boom to prevent the box from falling if it were knocked off.

In order to reduce the number of accidents involving crane operations, it is recommended that operators review with all personnel at their safety meetings the proper procedures for safe crane operations, particularly as to the role of the flagman. Available publications containing information for use as guidelines for safe crane operations are as follows:

Offshore Operators Committee, *Manual of Safe Practices in Offshore Operations,* Section XII, "Crane Safety Procedures," New Orleans, Louisiana.

American Petroleum Institute, *API Recommended Practice for Operation and Maintenance of Offshore Cranes,* API RP 2D, Dallas, Texas.

[signed] D.W. Solanas

Oil and Gas Supervisor

Field Operations

Gulf of Mexico Area