

## **Fatal Alert**

**June 24, 2008**

With the drilling operation completed the hole was circulated for about two hours as the rig crew made preparations to trip pipe. After tripping about sixty stands of pipe, the rig crew made preparations to lay down the remaining drill pipe sideways using an automated electric/hydraulic catwalk. The automatic catwalk eliminates the necessity for handling pipe during pick up and lay down operations. Each section of drill pipe measures thirty-one feet in length.

After several sections of drill pipe were laid down, the Assistant Driller gave the remote control for the automated catwalk walk to the Motorman. Who later passed the controls to the Floor Hand and advised him that the pipe rack was full and was going to move the drill pipe from the pipe rack to the tub. The Floor Hand asked the Motorman if everything was set on meaning is the catwalk ready for the next joint of drill pipe. The Motorman nodded, meaning yes it is. The Floor hand did not visually check the equipment before starting to use it to lay down the next joint of drill pipe.

With the catwalk positioned at the drill floor and the skate presumably set, the Motorman descended the stairs to the front yard area of the rig as the rig crew continued to trip another section of drill pipe. As the elevators were lowered, the Floor Hand placed the drill pipe in the V-section of the carriage. As the elevators continue to be lowered the drill pipe slid down the V-section of the carriage. When the drill pipe was about 4-6 inches from resting on the carriage, the Floor Hand tripped the elevators, releasing the drill pipe. After the drill pipe was released from the elevators it jumped from the V-section of the carriage and started to slide off between the safety pins on the catwalk. As the drill pipe was sliding off the catwalk, the Floor Hand looked down and saw the Motorman attempting to remove a plastic drum that was under the pipe rack. The Floor Hand yelled at the Motorman alerting him to the drill pipe that was sliding off the catwalk. As the Motorman was running for the safety of the substructure, the drill pipe fell approximately thirty feet striking him in the head knocking him to the ground. The Motorman was transported to a medical facility where he was pronounced dead.

### **Significant Findings:**

- The drill pipe was released from the elevators before the skate of the automated catwalk was properly position to accept the drill pipe, or the pipe was not lower enough to properly be accepted by the catwalk skate.
- The drill pipe hopped/jumped and slid off the catwalk striking the Motorman.
- The Motorman was working in an area where he was not expected or needed to be.
- A buffer zone of 30 feet was not established around the catwalk as identified on the Job Safety Analysis (JSA).
- The Motorman did not sign the JSA.
- There were no mechanical malfunctions noted with the Automated Catwalk.
- The toxicology report received from Department of Health for the deceased was negative.

### **Recommendations:**

- Brief all employees on the facts and circumstances of this fatal mishap.
- Ensure all employees involved in activity attend the JSA meeting relating to the activity.
- Mark the buffer zones relating to the hazardous area associated with the catwalk operations.
- Ensure the recommendations addressed in the JSA are enforced.
- Do not allow objects to be dropped from the rig floor.
- Train employees to verify equipment is ready for use through there own visual inspection of the equipment (never take the word of another employee that equipment is ready/safe for use).
- All equipment operators should read and understand the instructions put forth in the operator's manual.