

HSE information sheet

Guidance on procedures for the transfer of personnel by carriers

Offshore Information Sheet No 1/2007

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Introduction

1. This information sheet provides guidance on operations that involve the transfer of personnel to, from and around offshore installations by means of utilising suitable lifting equipment and personnel carriers. It replaces Safety Notice 10/80 (SN 10/80) (issued April 2001) which has now been withdrawn.

Background

2. As a result of a substantial number of offshore interventions by HSE and due to continuous improvements in personnel carriers used for offshore transfer operations, it has become clear that the information contained in SN 10/80 no longer reflects the current operational situation. Therefore this information sheet has been produced to provide up to date guidance on best practice relating to this subject.

Scope

3. This guidance covers some of the operational situations involving personnel transfer by suitable lifting equipment and carriers. For example:

- Transfer of personnel between offshore installations and supply boats or similar types of vessel.
- Personnel riding operations which are carried out when transferring personnel to, or evacuating from, designated areas on an offshore installation such as utility shafts and other types of shaft or restricted spaces. (This would include evacuation of injured persons from such areas).
- Transfer of personnel to/from mobile installations which are stacked or in sheltered harbour conditions.

This guidance specifically does NOT cover the following types of operations that use lifting equipment and personnel carriers:

- Use of a crane with a suspended work basket or cage which is being used as a working platform.
- Equipment used for man riding and personnel transfer operations in and around the drilling area.
- Rope access systems.
- Any form of emergency evacuation equipment and its associated handling facilities i.e. TEMPSC etc.
- Purpose designed machinery for lifting persons such as powered access platforms ("cherry pickers"), personnel traverse platforms etc.
- Passenger lifts of all types.
- Any personnel transfer operations between ships using the ships work equipment. (Ships and their associated personnel transfer operations are regulated by The Maritime and Coastguard Agency [MCA])

Actions

(a) Personnel transfer operations using lifting equipment and personnel carriers should only be undertaken when the particular circumstances make it essential, and it is not reasonably practicable to transfer personnel by less hazardous means.

(b) Duty holders and operators need to have clear written risk assessments and procedures which cover all aspects of personnel transfer operations, including the setting up of an effective communication system between all parties involved. The procedures should be written to reflect the actual lifting equipment and type of personnel carrier that is used, together with the installation characteristics, and particular hazards and risks associated with special usage situations, (i.e. recovery from utility legs etc).

As a guide incident analysis taken over a period of some years indicates that the main hazards faced during transfer of personnel by carrier include:

- Persons inadvertently falling from the carrier.
- Lack of lateral impact protection for personnel.
- Severe vertical impact on landing carriers.
- Lack of dropped object protection.
- Immersion or being placed in the sea.
- Hazards faced by personnel when accessing/egressing the carrier.
- Hazards faced when recovering personnel from restricted spaces such as those found in utility legs etc.
- Environmental hazards such as sea state, wind speed and direction, visibility, fog/mist etc.

Risk assessments, as a minimum, should cover the above situations together with any other type of hazard that may be present during a particular transfer and/or recovery operation.

(c) Only approved lifting equipment, which has been marked as suitable for man riding or suitable for personnel transfer should be used. Guidance on some essential features required for lifting equipment of this type is given in HSG 221¹, specifically paragraphs 259 to 274 inclusive.

(d) Personnel carriers should as a minimum satisfy the appropriate sections of the European machinery directive and be marked as such. The design of personnel carriers should minimise the risk of persons being crushed, trapped, struck or falling from the carrier. Guidance on some essential features required for carriers of this type are also given in HSG 221, specifically paragraphs 275 to 277 inclusive.

(e) Specially designed personnel carriers such as those used to evacuate injured persons from utility legs and other confined areas should conform to appropriate standards, specifications and ergonomic requirements bearing in mind the possible condition of the casualty. The risk assessment should identify all types of hazardous situations where the lifting equipment and, in particular the personnel carrier, may have to continue to operate safely, i.e. potentially explosive atmospheres, fires and chemical spills.

(f) All lifting equipment, personnel carriers and their attachments are subject to a pre-use check regime and also to a thorough examination by a competent person at intervals which are specified in the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER)² (or more frequently if specified by the competent person). Defects identified in the Schedule 1 report of examination must be remedied in accordance with LOLER regulation 10(3).

(g) Crane operators and banksmen should be trained to assess all hazards associated with the personnel transfer operation, and to implement the lifting plan and the corresponding procedures devised. Persons being transferred should be briefed on the procedure and risks which could be involved during this operation.

Relevant legal requirements

The main legal requirements are:

- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (HSWA)
- The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations SI 1998/2307 (LOLER)
- The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations SI 1998/2306 (PUWER)
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999/3242 (MHSWR)

References

In addition to industry guidance further guidance on this subject can also be found in the following HSE publications:

¹ Technical guidance on the safe use of lifting equipment offshore HSG 221 Second edition HSE Books 2007 ISBN 978 0 7176 6229 6

² Safe use of lifting equipment: Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998: Approved code of practice and guidance L113 HSE Books 1998 ISBN 978 0 7176 1628 2

³ Safe use of work equipment: Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998: Approved code of practice and guidance L22 Third edition HSE Books 2008 ISBN 978 0 7176 6295 1

⁴ Management of health and safety at work: Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999: Approved code of practice and guidance L21 Second edition HSE books 2000 ISBN 978 0 7176 2488 9

Further information

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This information sheet contains notes on good practice which are not compulsory but which you may find helpful in considering what you need to do