



Safety Alert No. 489

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**BSEE Reminds Offshore Workers:  
Conduct Pre-Job Assessment for Potential Hazards;  
Stay Vigilant of Surroundings**

The offshore environment can present challenging and potentially dangerous working conditions that require constant situational awareness. A recent incident involving an offshore worker who fell through an open hatch cover on a platform is prompting this BSEE alert, reminding offshore workers about the importance of situational awareness and continuously checking your surroundings for potential hazards. Situational awareness applies to various work situations, including loose grating, damaged handrails, hot work areas, loads being lifted above or around you, red zones, and production and well operations related to pressure. This vigilance can be the difference between life and death.



Figure 1. Blowout preventer work platform.

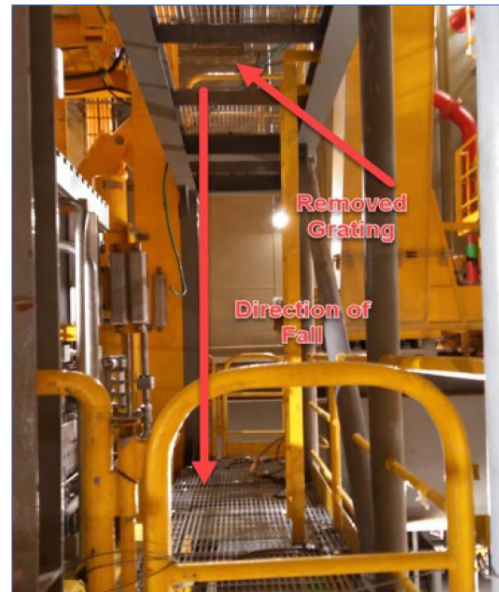


Figure 2. Hatch cover removed.

An incident was recently reported to BSEE involving a worker who fell through an open hatch cover on the blowout preventer platform that had been removed due to damage (Figures 1 and 2). The worker sustained injuries to his leg and knee. Multiple factors

contributed to the incident, including a lack of situational awareness for potential hazards, inadequate fall protection measures, and the failure to 1) properly secure the hatch covering the hole, 2) take corrective action after the cover was removed, and 3) alert other personnel to the hazard.

**BSEE recommends that operators and their contractors, where appropriate, consider doing the following:**

- Check your surroundings prior to starting work for any potential hazards.
- Identify and document hazards and then communicate these to all personnel.
- Ensure the proper fall protection is used when working at heights.
- Check temporary equipment and work platforms for hazards prior to use.
- Utilize a spotter to help identify and communicate any hazards when working at heights.
- Install barricades and flag areas with questionable walking or working surfaces. Soft barricades (e.g., caution tape) may be temporarily used, but hard barricades should be installed.
- Ensure ladders that connect decks have safety gates that swing closed when not held open.
- Remind personnel to stay vigilant of their surroundings when working on or near elevated work platforms.
- Remind personnel to work at a pace that allows for continual reassessment of dynamically changing work environments.
- Follow approved procedures for the work being performed and outlined in the job safety analysis.

– BSEE –

A **Safety Alert** is a tool used by BSEE to inform the offshore oil and gas industry of the circumstances surrounding a potential safety issue. It also contains recommendations that could assist avoiding potential incidents on the Outer Continental Shelf.

**Category:** Job Site Analysis