Anchor Handling Safety Meeting Kit

WHAT’S AT STAKE

Anchor handling is a critical operation performed in the offshore oil and gas industry, particularly during the installation, maintenance, and decommissioning of offshore structures such as drilling rigs, production platforms, and floating vessels.

WHAT’S THE DANGER

COMMON DANGERS OF ANCHOR HANDGLING

- **Equipment Failure:** Winches, cables, chains, and anchor handling tugs, can experience mechanical failures.
- **Personnel Injuries:** There is a risk of personnel getting caught, entangled, or struck by moving machinery, cables, or chains. Falls from height, slips, trips, and other accidents can also occur during the operation.
- **Vessel Capsizing or Instability:** Uncontrolled movements, excessive strain, or inadequate weight distribution can lead to capsizing, listing, or loss of stability, endangering the crew and equipment onboard.
- **Collision with Underwater Infrastructure:** During anchor handling, there is a risk of anchors striking and damaging underwater infrastructure such as pipelines, subsea cables, or other installations.
- **Environmental Impact:** Accidental spills or leaks of pollutants from vessels or anchor handling equipment can also harm marine ecosystems.
- **Unpredictable Weather Conditions:** Strong currents, high winds, and rough seas can make the operation challenging and increase the likelihood of accidents, equipment failures, or loss of control.
- **Communication and Coordination Challenges:** Failure to maintain clear and timely communication can lead to misunderstandings, errors in handling procedures, or inadequate response to emergencies.
- **Human Error:** Mistakes in judgment, miscommunication, lack of proper training, or fatigue can result in incorrect procedures, inadequate equipment handling, or failure to recognize and address safety hazards.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

COMMON ACCIDENTS THAT OCCUR DURING ANCHOR HANDLING OPERATIONS:

- **Slipping or Tripping:** Working on a vessel’s deck or on slippery surfaces while

handling anchors and equipment increases the risk of personnel slipping or tripping and sustaining injuries.
- **Pinch Points and Crush Injuries:** Accidents can occur when personnel's body parts or clothing get caught or trapped in pinch points or between moving equipment, resulting in crush injuries.
- **Falls:** Falls from height can happen during anchor handling activities, especially when personnel are working on elevated platforms, cranes, or rigging structures.
- **Struck by Moving Objects:** Uncontrolled swinging or movement of the anchors, snapping cables, or loose objects can cause severe injuries if they contact personnel.
- **Equipment Failures:** Sudden release of tension, whipping cables, or uncontrolled movements of heavy equipment can pose a significant danger to personnel in the vicinity.
- **Collisions:** Collisions can occur during anchor handling operations when vessels come into contact with each other, underwater structures, or other infrastructure.
- **Fires and Explosions:** Accidental fuel spills, ignition sources, or equipment malfunctions can lead to fires and explosions during anchor handling operations.
- **Environmental Incidents:** Mishandling of anchors result in damage to ecosystems.

BEST PROTECTIVE PRACTICES IN ANCHOR HANDLING OPERATIONS

1. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): Wear the necessary PPE:

- **Hard hat:** Protects your head from falling objects or bumps.
- **Safety goggles or face shield:** Shields your eyes and face from debris, splashes, or flying particles.
- **Protective gloves:** Provide hand protection against cuts, abrasions, or pinch points.
- **Safety footwear:** Use steel-toed boots to protect feet from heavy objects.
- **High-visibility clothing:** Wear brightly colored clothing enhance visibility.
- **Life jackets or personal flotation devices (PFDs):** Use floatation devices when working.

2. Training and Knowledge: Acquire proper training and knowledge specific to anchor handling operations.

3. Communication and Coordination: Use established hand signals, radio communication, or other communication methods to ensure clear and timely information exchange.

4. Risk Assessment: Conduct a thorough risk assessment before beginning anchor handling operations. Identify potential hazards, evaluate the risks, and develop appropriate control measures.

5. Safe Working Practices:

- Maintain a clean and well-organized work area to minimize trip hazards.
- Ensure proper lighting is available, especially during night operations.
- Follow proper lifting techniques when handling heavy objects to avoid strain or injuries.
- Stay clear of areas where there is a risk of being caught or trapped.

6. Emergency Preparedness: Know the location of emergency equipment.

7. Practice Self-Care: Take care of yourself by getting adequate rest, eating well, and staying physically fit.

8. Report Equipment Issues: Regularly inspect equipment for any signs of wear, damage, or malfunction.

9. Maintain a Clean and Organized Work Area: Keep your work area clean and free of clutter.

10. Safe Lifting and Handling: Use proper lifting techniques when handling heavy objects or equipment.

11. Risk Assessment: Take part in the risk assessment process and contribute to identifying potential risks.

FINAL WORD

The hazards associated with anchor handling, such as equipment failures, personnel injuries, collisions, and environmental impacts, underscore the need for strict adherence to safety protocols and best practices.