

## CLIMBING ACCIDENTS

### The Story

Here are summaries of a few preventable offshore fatalities involving climbing accidents:

1. While working on the blowout preventer, a roustabout on a mobile offshore drilling unit in the Gulf of Mexico climbed through the rotary table onto a trolley beam located under the rig floor. He was not wearing a safety belt or harness, although company safety policy required the use of safety belts by all personnel working aloft. After passing an air hoist line to another worker on the beam, the roustabout slid back along the beam and started to climb over a four-inch pipe-welded to the top of the beam and up through the rotary table. He suddenly lost his balance, fell 60 feet to the deck, and bounced into the water. The assistant driller had earlier the same day warned the employee that climbing through the rotary table was dangerous and he might fall. The roustabout had responded that he wouldn't fall. His body was recovered the following day.
2. A derrickman on a platform in the Gulf of Mexico climbed to the crown of the derrick to perform routine maintenance and inspection. On his way back down he stopped at the railed walkway that ran around the derrick and removed his climbing belt. He then climbed down onto the first horizontal girder below the walkway, which was about 80 feet above the drill floor. He had no tools with him. He had begun to move toward the northwest corner of the derrick when he slipped and fell, striking the derrick framework and pipe rack before landing on the drill floor. He was dead on arrival at a hospital.
3. A roustabout working on a column of a jack-up drilling rig under tow was riding down on an electric-powered hoist cable. The electric hoist stopped for unknown reasons. Rather than dangle at the end of the cable, the roustabout unfastened his safety belt and attempted to climb the ten feet up the greased hoist cable to the top of the column. He lost his grip on the cable and fell to his death on the deck 150 feet below.

### Lesson Learned

*The lessons to be learned are self-evident, human carelessness and failure to take simple precautions are frequently significant contributing factors to injuries and deaths.*

*Prevention Through People*



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