



Operational Alerts inform Signal Mutual Members of serious incidents within the Mutual that resulted in permanent disability, death, or a significant near miss. If you have similar operations, please share this Operational Alert and have a safety discussion with operation managers, supervisors, equipment operators, and all affected employees. It is imperative that management review their operational controls at all levels to mitigate similar hazardous conditions and/or acts.

INCIDENT: UNSAFE RIGGING PRACTICE NEAR MISS

SUMMARY OF RECENT INCIDENT

Shop workers fabricated structural steel pieces for delivery to a vessel at a port, where the eight structural steel pieces, weighing a total of approximately 2,400 pounds, were loaded onto a large wooden pallet at the shop. A forklift was used to load the pallet onto a truck for shipment.

After delivery, personnel working on the vessel at the port were not anticipating that the load would be palletized and had already positioned the crane for loading. Rather than adjusting the plan, the riggers attempted to move the load and rigged the entire pallet with a basket hitch.

Fortunately, the operator followed his instincts and training to slowly lift the load and hold it at about one foot to test the load's stability. In the middle of the test lift, the pallet broke and was promptly set back on the truck bed with no resulting injury to personnel or damage to equipment.



CONSIDERATIONS



All rigging gear must be rated to manage the anticipated load, and the capacity must be labeled. Always use equipment that is rated correctly for lifting operations. Plan ahead and communicate necessary details with the Rigging Department, such as anticipated lifting points, equipment to be used, center of gravity, travel path, landing destination, and other lifting instructions to facilitate the efficient and safe transfer of materials.

When unexpected circumstances occur, STOP and rethink the plan. In this case, an extended boom forklift was available and could have easily been substituted to safely move the load onto the vessel.

Dropped loads continue to be a substantial risk for severe incidents. Additional guidance for lifting operations can be found at <https://www.imca-int.com/safety-events/unsafe-lifting-operations-potential-dropped-object/>.

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