



# Safety Alert

From the International Association of Drilling Contractors

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ALERT 09 – 20

## INCORRECT LENGTH OF TONG SNUB LINE RESULTS IN FATALITY

### WHAT HAPPENED:

A rig floor operation required a longer snub line so the drill crew changed out the snub line on the make-up tong for longer tong snub line. The floormen retrieved the old break-out tong snub line that was being utilized as a rig floor sling and installed it on the make-up tong. When the operation was completed, the drill crew did not replace the longer snub line with the standard length one. Two days later when the drill crew was making up a bit onto a bit sub the driller engaged the rotary into reverse to back the bit into the sub. This caused the make-up tong to rotate around 180 degrees from the anchor post, instead of stopping at 90 degrees. This resulted in the floorman manning the make up tong to become trapped between the tong and the extended snub line suffering fatal injuries.

### WHAT CAUSED IT:

- The drill crew did not replace the longer tong line with the proper tong line on completion of the task that required longer snub line.
- When the drill crew engaged the tongs they did not push the tongs around to a point that the snub line would be taut thus allowing them and the driller to see that the line was too long.
- The driller going off tour did not inform the driller coming on tour that the snub line on the make-up tongs was changed out for a longer one to accommodate a special operation.
- The supervisor felt that a JSA for tripping pipe adequately covered the steps of the task at hand when it actually did not (making up a bit).
- The practice of removing snub lines and placing them into service as a sling if they passed a visual inspection had developed despite a company alert stating that they are to be destroyed.

### CORRECTIVE ACTIONS: To address this incident, this company did the following:

- Rig Managers are to review this alert and the following procedures with all crews. Reference is to be made to the company's operations manual sections "Making a Connection", "Driller Tour Changes and Daily Checks", "Tong Care and Rigging"
- Rig personnel are to review and make changes to the relevant JSAs aboard their facility to reflect the requirement of a Permit To Work for changing of snub lines as detailed in company's Operations Procedure manual.
- Drillers are to incorporate the new drill floor check list as minimum standard into their daily checks of the rig floor.
- Rig Managers are to change the relevant JSAs to ensure the capture of the changes to procedures regarding changes being made to rig floor equipment.
- Rig Managers are to incorporate the minimum requirements of the procedures for "Making Up a Bit" when they are released to the fleet.

### IADC Note: Refer to IADC HSERG Section 3 for additional information.

Refer to: IADC Safety ALERT 03 – 28 TONG INCIDENT RESULTS IN A FATALITY and 04 – 11 MANAGEMENT OF CHANGE TONG SNUB-LINE REMOVAL RESULTS IN AN INJURY for information on similar incidents.

**The Corrective Actions stated in this alert are one company's attempts to address the incident, and do not necessarily reflect the position of IADC or the IADC HSE Committee.**

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Issued July 2009