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Marine Terminal Fall Protection for Personnel Platforms

In marine terminals, personnel platforms attached to the container spreader of a container handling gantry crane are commonly used to transport workers, equipment and tools to and from container ships. The longshoremen then perform various tasks onboard the ship, such as disconnecting the twistlocks that hold cargo containers together, attaching and removing lashing equipment that secure the stacks of containers on the ship, and handling other problems that may arise. During the transport of longshoremen to and from container ships, the hazard of falling is a major concern for employers, ship owners, and the longshoremen.

Fall Protection

Employers are required to ensure that employees use a personal fall protection system while working on top of a vessel's containers (see 29 CFR 1918.85(j)). However, the use of personal fall protection systems is not required while riding in a personnel platform. Instead, platforms must be enclosed by a railing or other equivalent means (29 CFR 1917.45(j) and 1918.66(c)).

OSHA recommends that employers and employees implement the following safety precautions to ensure the safety of workers being transported on personnel platforms:

- Install anchorage points in personnel platforms and ensure that all workers who are being hoisted use a personal fall protection system that meets the requirements of 29 CFR 1918.85(k)(6).
- Place anchorage points away from the entry point of the platform and ensure that the anchorage point does not interfere with the movement of personnel on the platform while the lift is in progress.
- Store tools and equipment safely so that they do not create a tripping or projectile hazard (see 29 CFR 1917.11(a) and 1918.91(a)).
- Require foremen and gang bosses to use the same fall protection methods as other employees.
- Coordinate and discuss the lift operation, the proper use of personal fall protection systems, and other safety issues with all personnel involved including:
 - Crane operator(s);
 - Person(s) being lifted;



Photo: OSHA

- Person in charge of the operation and;
- Signal person(s).

Lifts should be coordinated with pre-lift meetings or pre-shift gang meetings. Crane operators should be included in the meeting by radio if they are already in the crane.

Access Openings

OSHA standards require that personnel platforms be equipped with an access opening fitted with a means of closure (see 29 CFR 1917.45(j)(8)). OSHA recommends that employers use personnel platforms equipped with a full gate system meeting the requirements of 29 CFR 1917.45(j)(1)(iii)(A). The gate should swing inward, be self-closing, and use a positive locking mechanism. If a chain closure is used, OSHA recommends that employers instruct their employees to stand away from the opening while being hoisted.



Personnel platform with half gate

Photo: OSHA

- Exercise their rights under the law without retaliation, including reporting an injury or raising health and safety concerns with their employer or OSHA. If a worker has been retaliated against for using their rights, they must file a complaint with OSHA as soon as possible, but no later than 30 days.



Personnel platform with locking gate

Photo: OSHA

Workers' Rights

Workers have the right to:

- Working conditions that do not pose a risk of serious harm.
- Receive information and training (in a language and vocabulary the worker understands) about workplace hazards, methods to prevent them, and the OSHA standards that apply to their workplace.
- Review records of work-related injuries and illnesses.
- File a complaint asking OSHA to inspect their workplace if they believe there is a serious hazard or that their employer is not following OSHA's rules. OSHA will keep all identities confidential.

For additional information, see [OSHA's Workers page](#).

How to Contact OSHA

Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, employers are responsible for providing safe and healthful workplaces for their employees. OSHA's role is to ensure these conditions for America's working men and women by setting and enforcing standards, and providing training, education and assistance. For more information, visit www.osha.gov or call OSHA at 1-800-321-OSHA (6742), TTY 1-877-889-5627.



U.S. Department of Labor



This is one in a series of informational fact sheets highlighting OSHA programs, policies or standards. It does not impose any new compliance requirements. For a comprehensive list of compliance requirements of OSHA standards or regulations, refer to Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations. This information will be made available to sensory-impaired individuals upon request. The voice phone is (202) 693-1999; teletypewriter (TTY) number: 1-877-889-5627.