



Learning Event



WORKING AT HEIGHT

HAZARD

Physical
(Object at height)

**Person in
Line of Fire**

CONSEQUENCES

Actual: No harm to persons
Potential: This could have caused a fatality

WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO PREVENT SCAFFOLDING BOARDS FALLING DURING HIGH WIND CONDITIONS?

What Happened?

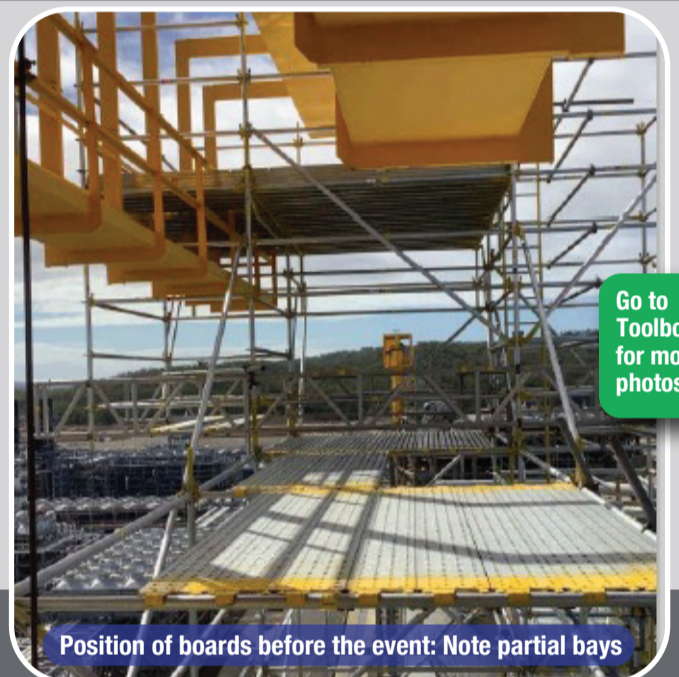
Four scaffold boards, each weighing approximately 20kg, fell from their installed positions on the top of an LNG tank during high wind conditions.



Fallen boards in situ



Scaffold location on top of LNG tank



Position of boards before the event: Note partial bays

Go to
Toolbox
for more
photos

Why did it Happen?

- The boards were installed in a partial bay of 'build boards'. Scaffold boards rely on a full bay of boards to prevent lateral movement. The build boards had been stored on the scaffolding to prevent handling and dropped object risks associated with their removal and later reinstallation. Storing build boards in partial bays was routine practice on site.
- Anti-lift latches on the fallen boards had remained disengaged since the boards were installed. Scaffolders shared a common belief that dropping the boards into place during installation would engage the latches. This only occurred 60% of the time. Design of the boards had been changed to make latch engagement more difficult, following user feedback that they often engaged unintentionally.
- The scaffolding inspection checklist focused on condition of the board and frame. It was difficult to determine latch position from installation and inspection locations. If being installed from above, the scaffolder would need to reach down and feel for the position of the latch after installing each board.
- The wind direction and shape of the tank amplified the upward wind forces at the location of the scaffolding boards. Scaffold boards in partial bays can be unstable in windy conditions.

What did they Learn?

Where anti-lift latches are part of scaffold board design, they need to be checked as the boards are being installed.

Scaffold inspections need to cover intrinsic safety features such as anti-lift latches.

Build boards should only be left in place if the risks have been assessed and controlled.

IOGP Life-Saving Rules

- ✓ Understand and use safety critical equipment and procedures which apply to the task
- ✓ Obtain authorisation before disabling or overriding safety equipment; deviating from procedures; crossing a barrier
- ✓ Take action to secure loose objects and report potential dropped objects



Ask yourself or your Crew:

What are the intrinsic safety features (clamps, locks, etc.) of the scaffolding that you use on site? How do you know they are in place and working as intended? Have there been any design changes to the scaffolding used on site? How were these communicated?

Further information:



SCAN ME

Safe Work Australia:
Guide to Scaffolds
and Scaffolding



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