

National Energy  
Board



Office national  
de l'énergie

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29 August 2012

To: All Companies under National Energy Board Jurisdiction  
Canadian Energy Pipeline Association  
Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers  
Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board  
Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board  
Occupational Health and Safety Agencies and Other Interested Parties

**National Energy Board Safety Advisory**  
**NEB SA 2012-02**  
**Injury During Vessel-to-Vessel Personnel Transfer by Pilot Ladder**

Following an incident associated with the use of a pilot ladder for a vessel-to-vessel personnel transfer at sea, the National Energy Board (Board) has issued this safety advisory regarding the evaluation and mitigation of hazards associated with all vessel-to-vessel transfers.

The Board directs your attention to this safety advisory and expects it will be given wide circulation to company personnel and contractors conducting vessel to vessel personnel transfers.

If you have any questions regarding this advisory, please contact Ms. Kim Maddin of the Board's Operations Business Unit at 403-299-2763, or toll free at 1-800-899-1265.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. Ditcher".

*for* Sheri Young  
Secretary of the Board

Attachment

cc: Transport Canada, Facsimile 619-990-1538



29 August 2012

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## **Injury During Vessel-to-Vessel Personnel Transfer by Pilot Ladder**

### **Purpose of the Safety Advisory**

Following an incident involving a vessel-to-vessel transfer of personnel at sea using a pilot ladder, the National Energy Board (Board) has issued this safety advisory regarding the effective mitigation of hazards associated with all vessel to vessel transfer methods.

### **Incident Description**

On 7 September 2010, while transferring personnel by pilot ladder from a supply vessel to a seismic vessel, a worker fell between the vessels into the sea. The worker was wearing a self-inflating life vest but was not wearing a survival suit, and suffered serious ill effects from cold water immersion. Further details of the incident are contained in an International Association of Geophysical Contractors (IAGC) Safety Alert (<http://www.iagc.org/files/2839/>).

### **Preventative Actions**

Companies must ensure personnel safety for every transfer method and operation. The transfer of personnel between vessels at sea introduces hazards and threats that are specific to the method, conditions, and frequency of the transfer operation.

Companies must undertake the necessary hazard and risk assessments to ensure that the hazards associated with a transfer method have been identified, options have been assessed and that effective controls have been selected and implemented to eliminate or reduce the risks to acceptable levels. Examples of controls and mitigation options that might be considered include transfer procedures, authority to stop the operation, training, competency assessment, illumination in low light conditions or darkness, continuous radio communications between vessels, standby emergency and rescue equipment such as fast rescue craft, personal protective equipment, properly fitted immersion suits in cold water areas, personal fitness requirements, fall protection equipment and specified operating limits for transfers.

Board regulated companies are reminded that they must be able to demonstrate through documented assessments, processes and other evidence that any transfer method that may be employed will be conducted safely.

### **Further Information**

For further information regarding this advisory please contact:  
Ms. Kim Maddin (403-299-2763)  
of the National Energy Board's Operations Business Unit.