

IMCA Safety Flash 01/20

January 2020

These flashes summarise key safety matters and incidents, allowing wider dissemination of lessons learnt from them. The information below has been provided in good faith by members and should be reviewed individually by recipients, who will determine its relevance to their own operations.

The effectiveness of the IMCA safety flash system depends on receiving reports from members in order to pass on information and avoid repeat incidents. Please consider adding the IMCA secretariat (imca@imca-int.com) to your internal distribution list for safety alerts and/or manually submitting information on specific incidents you consider may be relevant. All information will be anonymised or sanitised, as appropriate.

A number of other organisations issue safety flashes and similar documents which may be of interest to IMCA members. Where these are particularly relevant, these may be summarised or highlighted here. Links to known relevant websites are provided at www.imca-int.com/links Additional links should be submitted to info@imca-int.com

Any actions, lessons learnt, recommendations and suggestions in IMCA safety flashes are generated by the submitting organisation. IMCA safety flashes provide, in good faith, safety information for the benefit of members and do not necessarily constitute IMCA guidance, nor represent the official view of the Association or its members.

Safety Flashes – A Summary of 2019

This is a summary of the safety flash incidents reported in 2019. All the published safety incidents are available on the IMCA website as individual web pages. Safety Flashes, comprising a PDF format collection of a number of incidents are circulated to members by email.

134 incidents in 30 safety flashes were published by IMCA during 2019. The 134 incidents came to IMCA’s attention, or were reported to IMCA, between 10/10/18 and 12/12/19.

Members are reminded that IMCA does not publish all incidents received; the decision whether or not to publish an incident is subjective and editorial in nature. Moreover, statistically authoritative conclusions about the safety of the marine contracting operations of IMCA members cannot be drawn from analysis of safety flashes. The most that may be discerned is trends or patterns over time, not necessarily in safety as such, but in safety **reporting**.

	2018	2019
Total Incidents reported	166	160
Incidents reported by IMCA members	89 (from 29 members)	110 (from 31 members)
Members reporting >5 incidents per year	5 (reporting 48 incidents)	6 (reporting 68 incidents)
Incidents reported by other industry bodies	47	24
Incidents published	136	134
<i>Incidents not published</i>	30	26

“Other industry bodies” includes, but is not restricted to, the Marine Safety Forum (MSF), the UK Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB), the US Coast Guard and the UK Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

We continue to encourage **all** IMCA members to contribute their incidents to the IMCA safety flash system. This is an important way to influence industry safety awareness by actively taking part. It is worth reminding members that IMCA will work closely with contributors to ensure the strict anonymity and appropriateness of all published safety flash material. Nothing is published without clear permission from the contributing member.

Three Rising Trends to Note

- ◆ 16% of incidents reported were near misses or potential incidents; this is up on 9% in 2018. We encourage further reporting of near misses;
- ◆ 14% of incidents involved fires on vessels; this is an increase on 2018 (6%) and is an interesting reporting trend;
- ◆ Incidents involving gangways or personnel transfer (7%); this trend is rising as more incidents are reported by the offshore renewables sector.

Other Factors of Note Include:

- ◆ 7% of incidents reported involved use of the phrase “*high potential*”; though there is not an agreed IMCA definition of this term; this may be something for the HSSE Core Committee to discuss in 2020;

- ◆ 10% of incidents involved people suffering injuries to hands and fingers;
- ◆ Incidents involving seamanship, mooring or small boats (9%);
- ◆ Incidents involving failure of equipment (7%).

The IOGP Life-Saving Rules

Some of our members have adopted the IOGP Life-Saving Rules; still others intend to do so. The template for submission of safety flashes has been amended to allow members henceforth to indicate which of the Life-Saving Rules may be most relevant.

Informal analysis of the incidents received in 2019 shows the following:

IOGP Life-Saving Rules involved in IMCA incidents in 2019		
1. Bypassing safety controls	22%	NB Any incident might be attributable to possible failure to follow one, more than one, or none, of the IOGP Life-Saving Rules, and hence the total does not add up to 100%. This is an informal analysis primarily based on the titles of the safety incidents provided.
2. Confined Space Entry	4%	
3. <i>Driving</i>	<i>None</i>	
4. Energy isolation	12%	
5. Hot Work	1%	
6. Line of fire [including DROPS]	25%	
7. Safe Mechanical Lifting	12%	
8. Work Authorisation	2%	
9. Work at height	3%	
No IOGP LSR attributable	2%	

Why We Don't Publish Every Incident

This information is repeated from [IMCA SF 07/19](#). The following criteria may lead to submitted incidents being passed over:

- ◆ The incident involves a serious personal injury which has not been properly captured in the original communique;
- ◆ The incident report has a tendency to either shift responsibility or to apportion blame;
- ◆ The incident report uses safety jargon but fails to identify fundamental and obvious corrective actions;
- ◆ The incident report is too long and complex for a relatively minor incident (an example would be a non-serious slip/trip where the incident report ran to 11 pages);
- ◆ The incident report is too brief for a serious incident (an example would be an incident involving LTIs, dealt with in less than two hundred words, with no discussion of what happened to the injured person);
- ◆ The incident report comes in a form that cannot be rendered into an IMCA safety flash in a timely way – for example, incident reports delivered as a scanned PDF image, or in very difficult to understand English;
- ◆ The incident report contains no photographs, diagrams or images to support and/or explain the text.

Safety flashes exist to raise safety standards and thus to reduce incidents and injuries. They do this by bringing to the attention of your offshore crews' issues of critical safety importance and thus enabling lessons to be learned. It is important, therefore, to guard the impact and appeal of safety flashes. Just as would any media news publication, we do this by choosing with care what material we do and do not publish.

What matters is that every incident published, and safety flashes as a whole, tell a coherent story. It is this **safety story** that delivers lessons learned and the improvements in safety. It is the safety story that changes attitudes, hearts and minds.

The 2019 Safety Flashes

A full list of the safety flash incidents of 2019 – including those from other organisations which IMCA has passed on to members – is available at <https://www.imca-int.com/alerts/downloads/safety-flash/19/>