



Contractors in the Workplace

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Working with contractors is common practice to the marine and offshore industries. However, contractors often work slightly differently than full-time employees and constantly adjusting to work environments. Additionally, contractors usually have their own insurance, equipment and even safety culture. Shipping companies use contractors to save money as they can avoid having to pay Medicare and Social Security taxes, and various insurances. However, it's important to remember that safety must remain a priority when trying to save money. Since contractors may have different ways of working, are constantly adjusting to new work environments and people, different procedures and processes, there may be an increased chance for injury or incidents.

Corrective Actions for Working with Contractors

An extensive review of the MPS database and keyword searches for incidents related to contractors was performed and through studying these cases there were several corrective actions and lessons learned identified for working with contractors.

- Contractors to be given written instructions on how to properly use all PPE
- Ensure contractors are given all appropriate PPE right away when they start work
- Invite contractors to all safety meetings and briefings
- Frequently check contractor workspace and habits
- Crew cannot expect that contractors will automatically know about each ship's safety policies and procedures, and should continuously educate and remind contractors of the correct ones to follow.
- Proper safety meetings before any work begins to allow contractors to openly ask questions and fully understand their job.

Lessons Learned

| Cause | Lesson Learned |
|---|--|
| Improper training and unfamiliarity with ship policy and procedures | Closely monitor / supervise all work done by contractors |
| Improper training and unfamiliarity with ship policy and procedures | Double-check all work done by contractors |
| Improper Procedures | Frequent review of safety policy and procedures with contractors |
| Language Issues and frequency change of personnel | Communication is essential between employees and contractors |
| Complacency | Constantly remind contractors of the importance of Situation awareness |
| Maintenance | Ensure contractors and regular employees have all tools at the end of maintenance job as when they started |

Tips for Working with Contractors

When working with contractors it is important to keep in mind that they may be unfamiliar with the work environment and therefore extra safety precautions should be made. Some additional considerations for contractor training include:

- Informing contractors of the safety rules of the facility
- Instructing contractors in fire, explosions and toxic release hazards associated with the work and area of work prior to initiating a job
- Making sure contractors understand protocol in emergency as outlined in the emergency plan
- Understanding who is the correct point of contact in case of questions or emergencies
- Reviewing the critical alarms and warning signs and procedure in case of emergency.

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