



CASE STUDY

OISD/CS/2025-26/E&P/18

Dt.: 11.11.2025

INTRODUCTION

Title: Man Overboard (MOB).

Location: Offshore Installation.

Loss/ Outcome: Loss of life (Missing).

BRIEF OF INCIDENT

An incident of man overboard was reported at an offshore unmanned platform. In response to this event, the man overboard alarm was raised, and a comprehensive SAR (Search and Rescue) was launched. The MOB could not be traced. Hereafter, MOB is referred to as IP.

OBSERVATIONS/ SHORTCOMINGS

- All contractual employees are required to undergo five specified trainings — Survival at Sea, First Aid, Safety and Firefighting, Helicopter Underwater Escape Training (HUET), and Handling of Hazardous Chemicals. However, the Basic Offshore Safety Induction and Emergency Training (BOSIET) undertaken by contractual employees was not approved by the Directorate General of Shipping (DGS). The certificates could not be verified online, and the BOSIET certificate lacked a QR code—a standard feature of OPITO's digital certification process.
- As per information from offshore personnel and the IP's supervisor, the behaviour of IP was normal and on verification of welfare aspects of installation, such as food, accommodation, and communication facilities found the arrangements satisfactory.
- It was observed that personnel did not use work vests during their stay at the unmanned platform.
- The railing at the southeast (SE) location was missing and was later barricaded using pipes.
- The base of the missing railing of the southeast corner had a weld joint on one side and a composite material (FRP/GRP) with a nut-bolt fitting on the other side.
- Some deck handrails/railings were made using a combination of hollow composite materials and hollow square-shaped iron pipes.
- It was observed that the north side stair railing, made of composite material, had developed cracks at the bottom where it was fixed with bolts and studs...
- It was observed that no washroom facility was available at the unmanned platform.

ROOT CAUSE OF THE INCIDENT

- The southeast corner mezzanine deck railing was likely rusted or cracked and may have failed if the IP used it for support; nearby composite railings also showed cracks, indicating material weakness, and the residual portion of the railing suggested a non-standard method of attachment.
- Failure to use work vests or lifejackets was a contributing factor to the incident.
- A designated washroom was not available at the unmanned platform.
- The quality of the BOSIET training could not be ascertained, which may have been a contributing factor.
- Monsoon weather conditions probably affected recovery of IP.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- All personnel visiting unmanned platforms must wear work vests throughout their stay.
- An SOP for the inspection and repair of railings/handrails should be prepared, along with a system for periodic verification of their integrity.
- A study should be carried out to identify suitable materials and fixation methodologies for railings that can withstand offshore conditions, and a policy should be framed to standardize their selection, installation, and maintenance across all offshore locations. Cracked composite handrails or railings should be repaired or replaced immediately.
- Ensure that all contractual personnel undergo approved training courses from approved institutes. The training should be verifiable (by valid QR code or digital verification).
- Ensure that the prescribed training courses, as per Table-1 of OISD STD-176, are included in the contract in addition to training already listed or considered essential.
- All personnel, including the Wellhead team, must report any Unsafe Acts (UA) or Unsafe Conditions (UC) observed at unmanned platforms. If no UA/UC is observed, a NIL report should be posted. A system for recording and rectification should be developed.
- Provide an operational washroom facility at unmanned platforms to ensure safe worker convenience and to avoid unsafe movement away from the work area.
- An in-house Safety Audit should be carried out annually. It is suggested that such audits be conducted by a multidisciplinary team from the process platform.
- “Do not lean or support against the railing at offshore installations” — this instruction must be included in the safety briefing” and displayed at prominent places.



Photograph of Incident location



Photograph of broken railing



Photograph of cracks developed at the base of railing
