



ILA-USMX JOINT SAFETY COMMITTEE

OSH Circular 2023-12 (03 December 2023)

Avoiding the “Failure to Communicate!”

In marine cargo handling operations, the ability to effectively communicate your actions and intentions can literally make the difference between life and death.

The relationship between any shore-based or shipboard crane and the signalperson deployed to be the eyes and ears of the load mover cannot be overstated. OSHA requires this:

Shoreside: 29 CFR 1917.45(g)(10)

Communications. Means of communication shall be provided between the operator's cab and the base of the gantry of all rail-mounted cranes. This requirement may be met by telephone, radio, sound-signaling system or other effective methods, but not solely by hand-signaling.

Shipboard: 29 CFR 1918.81(i)

No draft shall be hoisted unless the winch or crane operator(s) can clearly see the draft itself or see the signals of a signalman who is observing the draft's movement.

It's also important to consider the communications between vehicular cargo handling equipment operators, as well. Systems of horn sounding and light signaling are appropriate means to establish and use during the course of most marine terminal operations. Working out and using such signaling systems can and should be a fundamental part of everyday work life. Workers are much better off when they take the time to communicate with one another; in nearly every respect.

The G2 Ocean Group recently published a safety bulletin which focuses upon this important subject and sets out a few case histories wherein appropriate signaling could have made a substantial improvement in the lives of several longshore workers.

Here's a link to that publication: [G2 Ocean Signaling Safety Bulletin](#)

Got an OSH-related question? Write to the JSC at: blueoceana@optonline.net

Working Together For The Benefit Of All

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