

Leadership in Safety Exercise Phase One

(The Incident)

Scenario: The project is a bridge construction over the Interstate 91. The following contractors were on site.

Do It All Inc. General Contractor (GC): a total of five GC employees were on site primarily to oversee the site, insure production flowed correctly and on time and insure the safety of all subcontractors

AJAX Iron: 20 workers from the Iron Workers were on site to place and attach structural Steel. AJAX Iron typically had one supervisor on site daily.

Engineers from the Transportation Agency: Two workers were on site to insure engineering specifications were maintained in all aspects of the work. These employees did not have authority over the safety of the site, but were compelled to comply

XYZ Crane Rental: Two employees from a crane rental company were on site to operate two cranes. Both Cranes were 50 ton, lattice boom style truck cranes. Both cranes were fully erect and operational on the day of the incident.

Weather: On the day of the incident it was sunny and in the mid 70's, with wind at less than 5 mph. This was the first day back following a stormy two days prior in which the site was not able to operate.

Personal Protective Equipment: Personal Fall systems with engineered horizontal lifelines attached to the bridge girders. Lanyards were required to be continuous tie off style. Hardhats, safety glasses, steel toe boots, gloves.

Safety programs/initiatives: Do It All Inc. had initiated weekly safety meetings requiring all contractors/employees to attend. These meetings were held Monday mornings. A predetermined subject would be covered in these meetings. Prior to the incident subjects covered included HAZCOM, Workzone safety, Confined Space, fall protection, Personal Protective equipment and heat related illnesses. All employees were compelled to sign an attendance sheet after the subjects were covered. None of the subjects were related to the site itself but were "canned" subjects.

GC employees mostly walked around the site daily, however it was common that they would be engaged in other activities (speaking with engineers, sales representatives, etc.) when they did.

Safety issues were pointed out to subcontractors and a list was maintained of all issues. The list was given to each subcontractor at the end of each week. No other follow-up was conducted.

Each subcontractor had to sign a contract, one requirement of which, was that the subcontractor agreed to follow all state and federal laws, including VOSHA regulations.

All employees were required to carry a current OSHA 10 hour card in order to work on site.

The incident: A non-fatal fall of an iron worker (John) who slipped, while bolting bracing to the bridge girders. The fall was 24 feet.

What happened: On the day of the incident, bracing was being craned over to the girders. Iron workers from the AJAX were rigging the load. The bracing was then boomed over to the workers on the girders. These employees would bolt in the bracing, then detach the rigging, finish their evolution and move to the next bolting point. It was during this move that John had lost his footing and fell 24 feet to the roadway below. John was transported to the hospital, where it was learned he suffered multiple fractures of his right leg and right arm. John would be out of work for 4 months.

The After Action: An investigation was conducted by the GC. In the course of the investigation it was found that John had violated a number of safety rules of the site. Among the things cited were:

- John was found to have not been using the proper lanyard. John was using a singular attaching lanyard which was not designed for continuous tie off.
- John was not wearing the proper footwear in that he was wearing non-safety toe “athletic” style shoes.
- John was improperly carrying tools while walking the beam, when instructions were that tools would be transported over the deck and then handed to the workers to attach bracing.

John was not fired for his actions. The company thought he had suffered enough in dealing with his injuries. However it was decided that John should go through another OSHA 10 hour training.