



# Offshore Operations & Conditions

Safety and Environmental Management System

SEMS 9-1

When working offshore on drilling rigs, production platforms, jack-up rigs, semi-submersible rigs or boats/barges, workers are faced with many different factors that increase their exposure to injury. This exposure increases even more during travel to and from your offshore location. It is important that all employees are alert to potentially dangerous circumstances, and take precautions that will lessen their risk of injury. Some of these potential hazards are:

**Poor Weather Conditions** - Unlike many other jobs, weather conditions directly effect the safety of offshore work. Wet, rainy weather may cause a construction company to halt a project, but not offshore operations. Work must go on! Everyone must adapt to weather conditions and continue with normal procedures. When you are in the middle of the ocean on a multilevel platform with limited space, both weather and work can become dangerous.

**Limited Space/Confined Work Quarters** – Limited workspace frequently increases exposure to incidents. Under these circumstances, equipment, machinery, and other workers create a potential for bumps, bruises and contusions, and striking injuries to the body. Four or five different contractors may be working on a rig at the same time. Everyone must be aware of other crewmembers and avoid doing anything that will cause injury to others. For example, cooks in restaurants usually have adequate room to operate, but offshore galleys are often more confined. To avoid accidents, cooks and galley hands must be cautious when working with knives, heat and flame in the “tight” quarters.

**Fatigue Factor** – For most people in the workforce, a normal workweek is forty hours. Offshore workers may put in more than eighty hours during one week. With twelve-hour workdays, fatigue is inevitable and the potential for accidents and injuries increases. A sufficient amount of sleep (at least eight hours for most people) is required for a person’s body to rest and recuperate. During rest breaks, workers should also replenish their system with lost fluids.

**Potentials for Violence in the Workplace** – Most employees spend only about eight hours a day with co-workers. Offshore workers not only work twelve hours with other employees but also eat, sleep and relax in close quarters with these same employees, regardless of their degree of friendship. Too much “togetherness” can lead to tension, disagreement and personality conflicts between people. **There is ZERO tolerance for fighting or violence in offshore work environments!**

**Evacuation in case of emergency** - Due to the remote locations of many offshore jobs, transport to land may be hindered by a number of factors. Weather, location, time of day, transportation availability, etc. It is not uncommon to experience a delayed arrival in helicopters or boats to the offshore job location. Medical services are limited offshore. Employees taking medications must take an adequate supply to work them and report all medications to your supervisor.