



FOR ISSUE TO: WHOLESALE, NETWORKS, ENTERPRISE, CONTRACTING

SAFETY FAMILY IN ACTION

Bypassing Energy Absorbers on Fall Arrest Lanyards

During a recent safety tour it was noticed that two personnel were incorrectly using their fall arrest equipment whilst climbing down a vertical ladder in an offshore wind turbine foundation

What happened?

The term “bypassing energy absorbers” refers to the act of attaching an unused twin-hook incorrectly, e.g. to a non-sacrificial attachment on the harness such as a side ‘D’ ring or to the harness webbing. Should the lanyard be required to arrest a fall, this may interrupt the intended function of the shock absorbing elements of the lanyard and increase the chances of equipment failure and potential injury.

The photographs opposite (not taken at SSE) show examples of unused twin-hooks being attached incorrectly.



What action is required?

Correct attachment of unused twin-hook

When using a twin tail lanyard, it is always advised to attach the second hook to another suitable and sufficient anchor point, avoiding the possibility of a bypass to the harness. However this may not be possible in all situations.

On some lanyards, it is possible to attach the unused hook to the ring at the bottom of the energy absorber where, like the previous option, the lanyard can deploy to its full extent as intended.

A third option, although not as ‘fool proof’, is to attach the unused hook to a ‘sacrificial loop’ on the harness. Some harnesses are fitted with a loop for this purpose. However, it is NOT advised to use a ‘gear loop’ as the forces these will break at may vary between equipment manufacturers.

Manager and Supervisor

- Remind all staff who use fall arrest equipment of the risks of ‘bypassing’ energy absorbers.

Everyone

- Ensure you are fully aware of how to correctly wear, use, store and inspect all items of PPE.
- Wear and use your fall arrest equipment properly and ensure, through a system of ‘buddy’ checks, that your colleagues are also wearing their equipment properly before use.

Please refer to the following guidance documents for more information.

- Manufacturer’s instructions provided with all items of PPE supplied by SSE.
- RS-SHE-105 “Working at Height” Risk Standard, and Working at Height Procedures and Guidelines.
- Training Brief: TB-RS-SHE-105-001 “Working at Height in the Workplace”, and associated Risk Cards.

Communication by (ü)	LSG	ü	Notice board	ü	Tool-box talk	ü	Team brief	ü
Communication complete by (ü)	1 week		2 weeks		1-month	ü	2-months	

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