



SECTION 46

WORKING NEAR WATER PROGRAM



1. Introduction

- A. Working over or near water can present and magnify hazards in the form of drowning, working at elevation, electrocution, inclement weather and cold stress.

2. Procedure

- A. There will be no horseplay or other unsafe acts that could cause injury to personnel while working over or near water. Safety nets must be provided when workplaces are more than 25 feet above the ground or water surface, or other surfaces where the use of ladders, scaffolds, catch platforms, temporary floors, safety lines, or safety belts are impractical. If such conditions are expected, contact the H&S committee for support in the use of safety nets. Watercraft will only be operated by trained personnel or competent in-country partners. Personnel are discouraged from jumping to or from any craft which is not secured, and from jumping between craft when a gangplank should be used. Fall protection should be provided when working over or near water where there is a potential for falling or slipping into the water. USCG-approved personal flotation devices (PFDs) shall be available to persons working over or near water, and worn when the risk of drowning is present. PFDs should be designed to float unconscious or helpless persons face up. Prior to and after each use, PFDs and life preservers shall be inspected for defects which would alter their strength or buoyancy (e.g., rips, tears, holes). All defective units shall be removed from the site and replaced. Defective units will not be used. Working where there is a clear potential for drowning should be avoided wherever possible. If it cannot be avoided, personnel must wear personal flotation devices (PFDs) or buoyant work vests. PFDs should be designed to float unconscious or helpless persons face up. The vests should be inspected before each use, and if damaged taken out of circulation. Life saving ring(s) shall also be available at the spacing of every 200 feet. Precautions should be taken to prevent falling from the work platform in the form of railings and toe boards. Personnel should tie off to a safety line. In areas subject to tidal flow or rising water levels, the HSO will monitor the water level to ensure that employees will not be trapped in a work area by the water. USCG-approved life rings (rope attachment not required) and ring buoys (rope attachment required)



should have attached at least 90 feet of 3/8-inch solid braid polypropylene rope or equal. The life rings or ring buoys shall be readily available for emergency rescue operations. Distance between ring buoys shall not exceed 200 feet. One ring buoy or life ring shall be provided on each lifesaving skiff. At least one lifesaving skiff shall be immediately available at locations where employees are working over or adjacent to water. Personnel trained in launching and operating the skiff shall be readily available during working hours. Skiffs shall be kept afloat or ready for instant launching. At a minimum, skiffs shall be equipped as follows:

1. Four oars (two if the skiff is motor powered).
 2. Oarlocks attached to gunwales or the oars.
 3. One ball-pointed boat hook. One ring buoy with 90 feet of 3/8-inch solid braid polypropylene rope or equivalent line attached.
 4. PFDs equaling the skiff rating for the maximum number of personnel allowed on board.
 5. First aid kit.
- B. The maximum number of passengers and weight that can safely be transported shall be posted on all launches, motorboats, and skiffs. This number shall not be exceeded and in no case shall the number of passengers (including crew) exceed the number of PFDs aboard. Outboard motors and skiffs shall meet the minimum flotation requirements of the USCG. A certification tag affixed to the hull is satisfactory evidence of compliance. An efficient whistle or signal device shall be provided on all powered vessels to give signals required by the navigation rules applicable to the waters on which the vessel is operated.