



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**
Engineering and Support Center,
Huntsville

Safety Office

Mishap Lessons Learned



Subject: Near Miss Incident involving a Crane and Swing Stage Scaffolding

Event: A crane operator thought the signalman/rigger on a hanging scaffold was calling for the ball. He slowly lowered the ball but it extended too far and made contact with the hanging scaffold. The operator mentioned there was static or other speakers on the radio that may have caused the error. Fortunately no property damage or injury resulted from this significant near miss.



Picture is an illustration of the crane configuration at the time of the near miss.

Root Cause: Operator Error. Clear communications were not established prior to lowering the ball.

Indirect Cause: Not following the AHA in the Critical Lift Plan which states to “Establish and maintain communication” and that “All load movements will be made under the direction of the signal person”. Allowing others to use the same communications line.

Recommendations: Designated/dedicated radio channels should be established for the crane operator and signalman. Disciplinary action should be established for any unauthorized personnel using these channels. If communication is broken, an “All Stop” should be immediately enacted until coms can be re-established. Ensure all workers have reviewed the AHA. Crane and Scaffolding were inspected by QPs before going back to work.