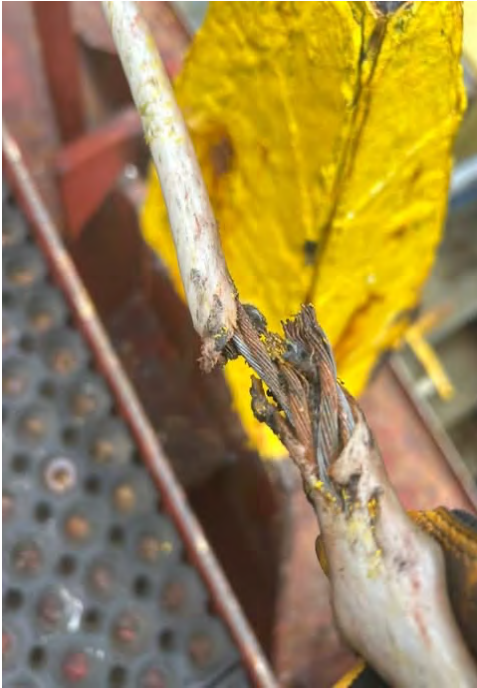




ILA-USMX JOINT SAFETY COMMITTEE

OSH Circular 2026-10 (05 October 2026)

Safe Access for Lashers [Railings]



In June of this year, an accident occurred at a major U.S. West Coast port which resulted in the death of a lashing foreman.

The ILA~USMX Joint Safety Committee desires to raise some consciousness about this particular accident, in that its causal factors appear to certainly be transferrable to containership operations at virtually every East and Gulf Coast port.



As explained to us, coming back from a lunch break a lashing gang foreman was reviewing his paperwork while seated on a lashing bridge's wire rope railing when the wire broke and allowed his fall to the hatch cover below. He apparently fell backwards and suffered massive head injuries.

Upon examination, the lashing bridge's wire rope railing had been coated with a plastic sleeve which had effectively disguised its corroded condition.

The lesson we can all learn: A serious assessment must be conducted when relying upon the strength and integrity of any perimeter railing erected 8 feet or more above a working surface. While a coated wire rope railing may foster delayed corrosion against the elements, they tend to hide the true condition of what's beneath. For that reason, vessel operators have an obligation to ensure diligent and timely change out and stevedoring employers have an obligation to conduct a safety check of those railings; making certain that they're capable of doing what's intended of them.

Got an OSH-related question? Write to the JSC at: blueoceana@me.com

Working Together for the Benefit of All

ILA-USMX OSH Circulars are devised to reflect the best possible information and guidance and are products of diligent research and the most up to date subject matter knowledge. Consequently, while the information contained herein is believed to be accurate, owing to a host of factors ILA-USMX can convey no direct or implied warranty relative to the reliance of parties upon content.