

STATE OF ALASKA
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
DIVISION OF LABOR STANDARDS AND SAFETY

AKOSH Program Directive 91-8

Date: August 7, 1991

To: All LS&S/OSH Staff

From: Robert W. Libbey, Director

Subject: Guidelines on the Stability of Well Servicing Derricks

- A. Purpose: This Program Directive provides guidelines to compliance officers and consultants, employers, and employees on the stability of well servicing derricks.
- B. Background: There have been several fatalities in the United States as a result of derrick collapses caused by the failure of temporary anchors in the oilwell drilling and servicing industry. Alaska's Petroleum Code, 08.310 (a) sets out the requirements for derrick construction and (a)(5) of this section specifically requires that "reasonable provisions shall be made to prevent derricks from collapsing...." and (a)(5)(A) and (B) require that this be accomplished by using an adequate number of sufficiently strong guy lines arranged and anchored as specified by the rig manufacturer or in accordance with accepted engineering practices or by construction the derrick and foundations to resist overturning in accordance with accepted engineering practices." Furthermore 08.310(k)(1) requires that "every telescoping and jackknife derrick in use at a well shall be effectively guyed, braced, or otherwise engineered to resist overturning in accordance with generally recognized safe practices in the industry."

Federal OSHA, which has not adopted a Petroleum Code and has no applicable standards must use the General Duty clause, Section 5(a)(1) of the OSHAct to issue citations for violations involving hazards associated with derrick construction. OSHA, therefore contracted with Sigma Associates, Ltd. to develop guidelines detailing the type of temporary stability systems, type of soils and its holding capacity, methods of installing guywire anchors, integrity determination of the system, actual pull testing, and acceptable parameters in lieu of actual pull testing. These guidelines are attached as Appendix A of this AKOSH PD and should be used to determine if the derrick has been constructed in compliance with the Alaska Petroleum Code.