Incident Report

Location: Oakland, CA
Control Type: N/A
Machine Type: N/A
Speed: 1000fpm
Rise: 41 Stops

Hoistway Configuration: High Rise, 4 Car Group
Conditions: Construction Crew Hoisting Counterweight Frame

Description of Incident

• A construction crew was hoisting a counterweight frame to the 41st floor using a drum hoist with \( \frac{1}{2} \)“ wire rope.

• The hoist rope went up Car A hoistway, deflected kitty-corner to Car C hoistway, and down the shaft of the counterweight to be hoisted.

• The crew was using two-way radios on a dedicated channel but as the counterweight reached the top floor, radio communication was lost.

• The counterweight continued to travel as the Apprentice continued to operate the hoist.

• The counterweight became two blocked in the rigging, with the hoist still running and the \( \frac{1}{2} \)“ cable began to fail.

• The Apprentice did not hear any overloading of the hoist motor but heard the lays in the \( \frac{1}{2} \)“ cable begin to pop. As the cable lays ruptured, the Apprentice stopped the hoist and ran for cover.

• The counterweight fell 41 floors to the pit, destroying the counterweight and the pit structure. The hoist cable slashed through the false car in the overhead as it overhauled through the rigging.

• The Mechanic immediately reported the near miss to his supervisor. Fortunately, no one was injured.
Recommendations and Lessons Learned

- Always perform a JHA.
- Test and verify two-way communication.
- Have a plan if communication is lost.
- Visually inspect all rigging prior to each use.
- Verify equipment is certified and tagged.
- Take NEIEP Signaling and Rigging Courses and become certified.
- Demand proper hoisting and rigging equipment from your employer.