

Dallas tower crane dismantling collapse.

It was only a matter of time that “another” tower crane collapse of this type would happen, claims Terry McGettigan of “Tower Crane Support”. The de-torquing and or non-tightening of mast bolts is often done during disassembly, assembly and climbing as well. It has become a common routine over the years, and it is notoriously practiced with Peiner - TS212 / Pecco - S35 mast sections. Unfortunately, it looks to have been taken a drastic step further during this disassembly.



It is evident from this photo that at least 6 of the 8 mast bolts on this connection were not only loosened - but also removed! No doubt the others were loose. And from the looks of other photos, it appears it was not the only mast connection where this was done. I have researched and documented over a thousand major TC collapses and have uncovered several similar collapses due to the premature loosening of mast bolts.

UK, 2005:
2 Dead, 1 injured



Germany, 2008:
1 seriously injured



I have been warning about risky practices such as, mast bolt de-torque and other short-cuts for years; and how many companies - little by little - over the years - have strayed from manufacturers instructions and regulatory rules. Like all incidences, there are always several unsafe acts leading up to an event. ***In this case, the catalyst was the premature loosening and removal of mast bolts***, the wind was only 'a' contributing factor. The mast would have never blown over if ***'all' mast bolts stayed torqued*** to specifications, and not removed until; conditions permitted, and the assist crane is attached.

Hopefully, this tragic incident will shed light on the unintended consequences when one deviates (no matter how seemingly harmless) from engineered procedures. Twenty years ago, it took 2 to 3 days to assemble / disassemble a tower crane, now it is often done in 1 day? My condolences to the families of; Terry Weaver and Tom Fairbrother who lost their lives.

Terry McGettigan
Tower Crane Support