



International Boundary and Water Commission United States Section

For immediate release
April 29, 2015

CRANE ACCIDENT OCCURS AT AMISTAD DAM; TWO AMERICAN WORKERS ARE MISSING

On April 29, 2015 at approximately 12:00 p.m. CDT an accident occurred at Amistad Dam while workers were performing routine maintenance. Two employees of the United States Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission, United States and Mexico (USIBWC) fell into the water and are missing.

The accident occurred as the two Industrial Equipment Mechanics were pressure washing gate #2 on the downstream side of the dam, a recurring maintenance activity. While the cause of the accident has not been determined, initial reports indicate that a crane at the top of the dam was lowering two workers in a basket when the crane tipped, causing the basket to fall into the water, estimated to be 25-30 feet deep. Initial efforts by swimmers to reach the basket were unsuccessful. Emergency personnel were dispatched immediately to the site. Because of ongoing safety concerns related to the crane, divers have not been able to enter the water to reach the basket that had been carrying the men.

USIBWC personnel from the agency's Headquarters in El Paso, TX have been dispatched to investigate the accident. The USIBWC has suspended all agency crane operations until the cause of the accident has been determined.

“The personnel and families affected by this tragic accident are in our prayers. We will ensure that a thorough investigation is undertaken,” said U.S. Commissioner Edward Drusina.

The accident does not pose a threat to the structural integrity of the dam and there is no risk to the general public. Amistad Dam is an international dam across the Rio Grande at Del Rio, Texas-Ciudad Acuña, Coahuila. The International Boundary and Water Commission, United States and Mexico, is responsible for applying the boundary and water treaties between the two countries. In accordance with the treaties and other international agreements, the Commission operates and maintains Amistad Dam.

For more information:

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