

Winching equipment

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A client has recently alerted us to a couple of incidents involving winching equipment on board vessels.

What happened?

In the first incident a member of the vessel crew stood on a tugger winch support bracket with his foot protruding slightly from the support flange. As the drum rotated during operation, the securing bolts caught the man's boot, crushing his steel toe cap, resulting in injury to this big toe.

In the second incident, two members of the marine crew were carrying out routine maintenance on a cherry picker. This involved spooling off, greasing and respooling on, a section of crane wire rope. One person was positioned on top of the crane jib, crouched in front of the winch wire. His hand became trapped between the crane winch wire drum counter bar and rope guard during the respooling operation with the resultant loss of his left-hand index finger.

The client identified the following common themes:

- A full risk assessment had not been undertaken.
- No procedures of management of change.
- Procedure for new rope diameter manual spooling inadequate (second incident).
- The position of controls operator and his view of activities.
- Position of winch operator – standing on the winch frame.

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