# Hot work whilst working at height in a confined space – job was stopped

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**A third-party contractor's welder was standing on the wooden platform (the actual height was over 1.80m) inside a confined space.**

**IOGP Life Saving Rules:**

- Bypassing safety controls
- Working at height
- Confined space
- Work authorisation

## What happened?

During a site visit to a vessel, it was observed that a third-party contractor's welder was standing on the wooden platform (the actual height was over 1.80m) inside a confined space (a ballast tank) doing some flame-cutting jobs. No fall protection guards were installed around the worker, not was the worker wearing fall arrest equipment.

The job was stopped immediately and a temporary alternative working method was arranged where the worker wore a full body harness attached to with an inertia reel to a tripod.

## What went wrong?

- The personnel authorizing these activities – working at height doing hot work within a confined space:
  - Made no Permit to Work application for hot work nor for working at height nor for working in a confined space.
  - Did not conduct a review of the risk assessment for the task in hand.
- Inadequate supervision: there was no proper Control of Work by vessel crew or management at the site before the job started, and no ongoing verification of safe working as the job continued.
- There was a lack of hazard appreciation and risk perception by the persons involved; it took someone coming in from outside, observing the job, to actually stop it.
- It was easy to work unsafely: crew members misunderstood differing internal company procedural requirements for working at height.
- Various hazards were not recognised at all. Had the worker fallen within the tank, protruding metal elements meant that there was high potential for a very serious injury.

## Actions taken locally

- Reiteration of importance of thorough Risk Assessment, Permit to Work process, and Control of Work, including regular monitoring.
- Ensured more robust control of Working at Height activities and prioritized

availability of engineering controls (e.g. a scaffolding platform).

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