

Fractured finger while handling metal plates

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A crew member suffered a pinch injury to his right hand baby finger, resulting in a distal fracture.

What happened?

While working on deck, a crew member suffered a pinch injury to his right hand baby finger, resulting in a distal fracture to the tip of the finger and a significant laceration requiring sutures to the finger above the nail bed.

What went wrong?

Heavy weather had caused damage to welded plates on deck. While manually handling the plate back into position with another crew member, the injured person suffered a pinch injury to his finger which was trapped between the plate and frame. Following a medical review, the vessel headed into port to permit further diagnosis at hospital. An X-ray showed a distal fracture to the tip of the finger and the wound required stitches.



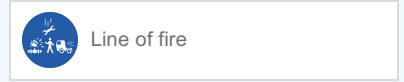
What was the cause?

- The design of the plate did not allow for safe manual handling.
- The installation of the plate had a permanent risk of finger entrapment.
- The risk assessments and toolbox talk used were generic in content and not task specific.
- The JSA used was for hot work only and did not include manual handling at all.

Lessons learned

- Safety by design: the plate was subsequently modified to have a pair of temporary handles to keep fingers away from the pinch points.
- Magnetic lifting handles sourced as a long term solution.

IOGP Life Saving Rules:



- Take care with generic risk assessments – ensure they are either modified to suit the task, or use a dynamic risk assessment or toolbox talk specifically for a full and thorough review of the task.
- If the task is slow, uncomfortable or inconvenient, can we use the toolbox talk or JSA to better define and understand these areas of risk? Can we remove the risk or reduce its likelihood or severity?

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