

Potential for diver injury operating a hand-held torque wrench

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A diver was involved in a near miss that could have resulted in serious injury when he was asked to function an ROV valve override on a subsea isolation valve with a hand-held torque wrench

What happened?

The diver was asked to operate an ROV override switch with a hand-held torque wrench.

The operation was observed by a third-party technician who intervened and stopped the job.

The use of a hand-held torque wrench to operate an ROV override on the valve was inappropriate due to the possibility of a sudden uncontrolled unwinding of the spring mechanism, which could have caused the torque wrench to rotate and hit the diver.

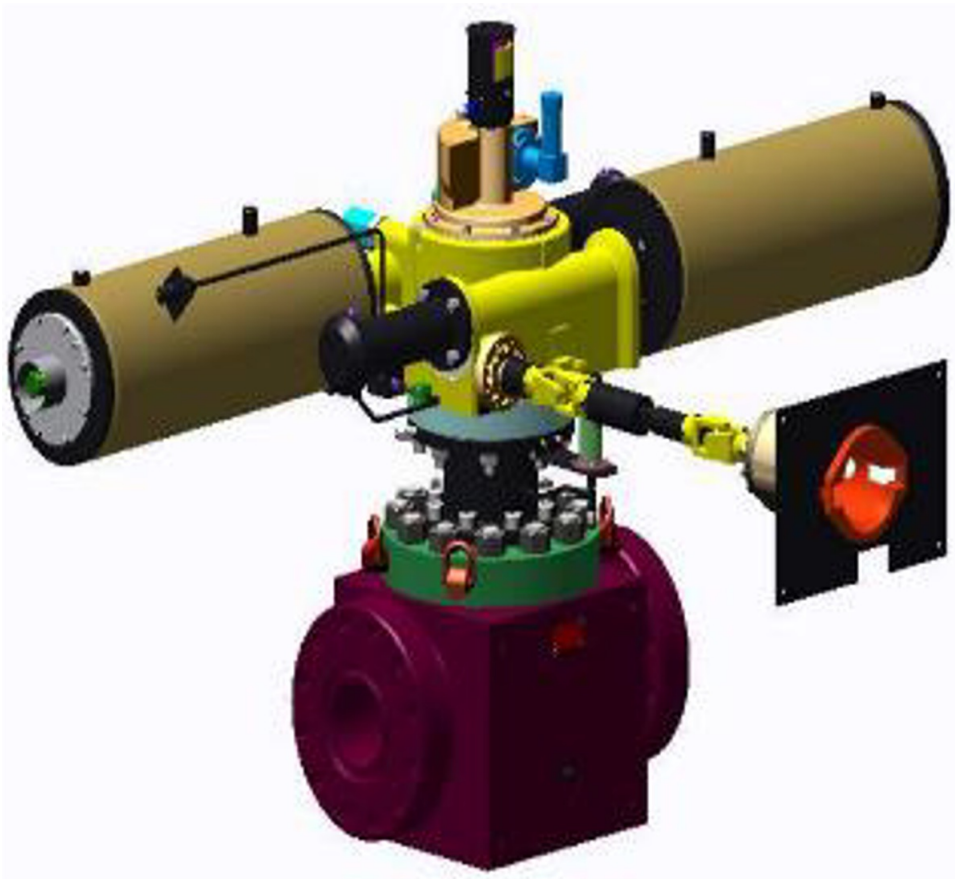
IOGP Life Saving Rules:



Bypassing safety controls



Line of fire



What went wrong?

- The warnings on the GA (general assembly) drawing stating that hand-held tools should not be used were ambiguous and were missed.
- The valves procedure issued by the client did not include a warning or highlight the dangers of using hand-held tools to operate the ROV override.
- Engineers were not issued with the appropriate installation operations manual, which included warnings not to use hand-held tools.
- The assumption was made that a hand-held torque wrench could be used. Our member notes that similar incidents have occurred within the organisation.

What actions were taken?

Any operation of an ROV override on a double actuated spring ¼ turn ball valve (fail safe) should not be operated with a manual hand-held torque tool, unless there is clear confirmation from the client or the valve manufacturer that it is safe to do so.

Members may wish to refer to:

- LTI: Contact with refrigerant gas causing hand injury
- Serious finger injury: procedures during engine maintenance
- LTI: Injury to right wrist

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