IMCA

Safety Flash

Finger trapped and injured while working on heavy equipment

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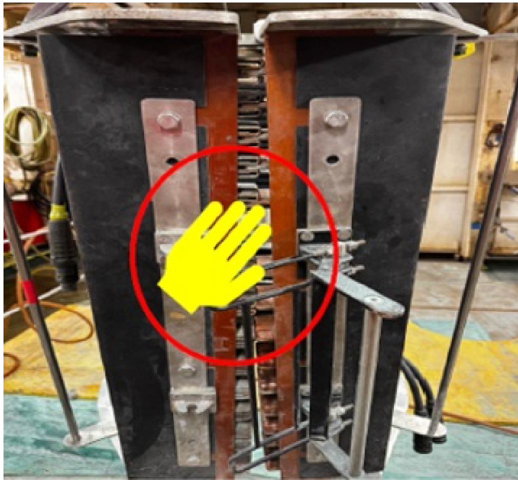
IOGP Life Saving Rules:

Line of fire

A third-party technician suffered a pinch injury to the right index finger.

What happened?

The incident – a Restricted Work Case (RWC) injury - occurred onboard a vessel while third-party technicians were conducting trials on pipelaying equipment. An Induction Heating Coil (IHC), suspended from a davit crane, did not open as intended. The technician, who was not part of the coating team, intervened to assist. During the intervention when the coil was subsequently prized opened, the technician's hand was placed near the closing joint. The coil then closed suddenly, pinching the individual's right index finger.



Showing the pinch point on the Induction Heating Coil

What went right?

- The job was stopped immediately, prompt medical treatment given.
- A safety stand-down conducted, followed by task-specific risk review to ensure that all controls established prior to return to work.

What went wrong?

- Change could have been managed better: The task was moved to a different work environment without acomplete risk review, preparatory checks, or a formal Management of Change (MoC) process.
- Equipment could have been better designed: The lifting configuration did not fully align with the operational environment, and restricted space limited safer alternatives. Visibility of safety signage and labelling required improvement.

- Use of generic rather than specific documentation: generic documentation was used instead of task-specific controls. The lift was incorrectly classified, and the designated rigging was not used.
- Supervision: Roles and expectations across involved teams were not clearly aligned, which resulted in gaps in supervisory oversight.
- There were gaps in the contractor's equipment assurance: Required compliance checks and supporting maintenance records for the contractor-supplied equipment were not available.

Actions taken in this case

- Ensuring task-specific risk reviews, and use of the Management of Change process when the work environment, set-up or method of work is changed.
- Improved equipment design visibility and usability, ensuring controls and labelling areclear and safe to operate.
- Ensured appropriate levels of supervision to cover multiple, complex or simultaneous tasks.
- Ensured that Short Service Employees are given adequate support and supervision.

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