

## Finger injury during work with rotating machinery

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Whilst working with a pillar drilling machine, a crewman got his glove caught in the rotating bit and dislocated his left thumb.

### What happened?

The incident happened on an ocean-going cargo vessel. Two engine room crewmen were using a drilling machine in the engine room workshop to fabricate a small part.

One of the crewmen put on leather gloves and tried to remove some metal chips that came out during the drilling process. His glove got entangled with the drill bit resulting in him dislocating his left thumb.

#### IOGP Life Saving Rules:



Line of fire



## Watch your hands 06

### BE PREPARED TO WORK SAFELY

#### DISCUSS THE TOPICS ...

- before starting a job
- any time during a job
- after completing a job

#### KEEP THE PROMPTS ...

in the pocket of your overalls.

### ARE *YOU* PREPARED?



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### BEFORE STARTING WORK, LOOK FOR THINGS THAT COULD HARM YOUR HANDS

- Heavy loads
- Over-reaching
- Pinch points
- Sharp edges
- Line of fire
- Corrosive or hazardous substances

### MAKE SURE

- You are wearing the right protection
  - You are using the right tools
  - Your hands are always in sight
  - If in doubt, **STOP!** and think again
- 

Both hand and foot operated emergency stop was immediately activated. The injured person was assisted by other crew members to cut off the glove and he was accompanied to the vessel hospital. After consultation with medical authorities over the radio, treatment was given on board.

A splint with bandage was applied to immobilise the thumb and painkillers administered. Ten days later when the vessel came to port, the injured person was sent to the doctor, where he was declared medically unfit and signed off.

## What went wrong? What were the causes?

- There was no evidence of risk assessment, no toolbox talk was conducted.
- The injured person was wearing gloves while using the drilling machine – there was a warning sign prohibiting wearing of gloves when operating the drill, posted in front of the drilling machine.
- Lack of safety awareness/habits.
- The **immediate causes** were:
  - Improper use of personal protective equipment (PPE) – the glove got entangled with the drill bit.
  - Carelessness and lack of safety awareness – the warning sign prohibiting wearing of gloves when operating drilling machine was ignored.
  - Improper use of equipment – the proper cleaning tools were not available for drilling and machining jobs.
- **Causal factors** were:
  - Inadequate planning – this potential risk was not identified.

- Inadequate supervision.
- The **root cause** was, the injured person did not follow instructions: he was not compliant with existing company requirement on PPE when working with rotating equipment.

## Actions taken

- Suitable and sufficient risk assessment to be carried out for routine and non-routine work.
- More effective toolbox talks to be held discussing hazards and controls.
- Reiteration of company policy that gloves are NOT TO BE WORN when working with rotating machinery.
- Warning signage if posted to be clearly visible.
- Consider additional supervision for less experienced crew.

Please refer to IMCA's short video on [Be prepared to work safely – watch your hands](#)

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