

De-rusting incident resulting in eye injury

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During descaling operations using a chipping hammer, a worker got dust or rust in his eye, although he was wearing goggles and a mask at the time.

What happened?

The incident occurred while descaling rust from inside the brake band of a winch, using a chipping hammer and a sanding disc.

IOGP Life Saving Rules:



Bypassing safety controls



Winch unit being cleaned



Brake band after descaling



Full face mask with respirator filter

What were the causes?

It is thought that owing to the awkward nature and inaccessible location of the brake band, the goggles loosened as the worker moved his head, allowing dust to enter.

Actions and recommendations

Our Member's recommendations were:

- Full face mask with respirator filter suitable for dust/particles to be used for heavy de-rusting and other similar maintenance activities.
- Check inside of full-face mask for foreign bodies before use.

- Take great care when removing head and face protection:
 - Bend forward at the waist. This will ensure any debris falls onto the deck away from the body and not into the face.
 - Check hair and run hands through hair/over the head to remove any debris/particles prior to removing goggles/full face mask.
 - Carefully clean full-face masks before and after use.
 - Get a colleague to help you can remove any debris from your PPE and clothing before removal.

IMCA notes that eye injuries arising either from incomplete protection of the eyes, or from material getting into the eyes from a person's hair or from the mask itself, have arisen a number of times before. Members may wish to focus on this area.

The following may be worth reviewing:

- [IMCA short video](#): Be prepared to work safely – *Protect your eyes*

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