Arm injury whilst using pillar drill

Safety Flash Published on **21 December 2017** Generated on **28 January 2026** IMCA SF 32/17

The Marine Safety Forum (MSF) reports another incident wherein a crew person was injured following misuse of a pillar drill.

IOGP Life Saving Rules:

- Line of fire
- Bypassing safety controls

What happened?

Crew were in the process of using a piece of 2mm metal plate to manufacture a metal blank for a pipe on the vessel's hot water system. It was necessary to drill a small hole (6 mm) at one end of the plate. For this operation, it was decided to use the workshop pillar drill.

Whilst drilling the metal plate the drill bit became stuck. This then forced the metal plate out of the drill vice. When the operator reached up to stop the machine the metal plate that was stuck to the drill bit dislodged, flew off the drill bit and hit his left arm.

What went wrong? What were the causes?

The MSF alert identifies the following issues:

- The task had not been properly risk assessed.
- The wrong tool had been selected for the job.

- The vice holding the job had not been sufficiently tightened.
- The speed of the drill had not been adjusted for drilling metal.
- The injured person was “not wearing his personal protective equipment (PPE) correctly”.

The MSF alert can be found here.

It is conspicuous that this is the third incident reported during 2017 in which crew have injured themselves whilst using a pillar drill. Members may wish to reiterate to their crews the fundamentals of safety when working with rotating machines of all kinds.

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