

Finger injury while using a crowbar to try to shift a large shackle

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During anchor handling operations, one anchor was on deck and crew were required to connect a wire socket to the anchor by using a shackle.

What happened?

The wire socket was in a difficult position for the shackle to be connected; to overcome this difficulty, the deck crew used a crowbar to try to get these items aligned. The crowbar eventually slipped while it was in use for the shackle's pin connection and consequently a crew member suffered an injury to the right ring finger.

The injured person received first aid treatment on board. He was subsequently sent to a barge to be checked by an available medic. The recommendation of the medic was that he be sent to hospital ashore.

What went wrong? What were the causes?

Similar incidents involving connection/disconnection of shackles are known to the industry, and have often led to serious injury.

Causes identified include inadequate identification of pinch points, and improper use of tools.

Lesson learnt

- Hazards can be hidden and risky situations may not always be identified.
- All crew members involved in similar tasks should be aware that use of crowbars on rigging under tension is not safe. Capstans or tugger winches should be used to reposition chains, wires or anchors. Only after everything is safe and without residual tension should the rigging team perform manual work.
- Another point to remember: never place your hand (or any part of your body) 'in the line of fire'.

This is a recent incident and is still under investigation. Any additional lessons learnt identified will be communicated following the investigation completion.

Members may wish to refer to the following incident:

IOGP Life Saving Rules:



Line of fire



Bypassing safety controls

- Lost time injury (LTI): Gangway deployment *[A crowbar was used to exert pressure on the lower section of the gangway, to allow the outboard pin to be removed. During this process, both the bosun and the AB were standing within the steps of the gangway when an outboard pin jumped out this section slid up quickly and trapped the bosun and able seaman. This extremely serious incident could have been avoided entirely by following the correct procedures.]*

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