

Dropped object to sea during rope access operations

Description of Process:

A Recently Cleaned and inspected section of outboard steelwork was to be coated using a coating system application gun utilising rope access.

Description of Incident:

Once the technician was connected to the ropes and outboard, he was passed the coating gun which he tethered to his harness using one of his available cowstails, however the technician did not identify that the gun was attached via a quick release connection mechanism. The coating scope went ahead with 4 of the 6 tie-in points successfully recoated before the coating cartridge depleted and had to be changed out. The technician positioned himself to ascend the rope, he positioned the coating gun to his righthand side. After the technician has successfully commenced his ascent, he was alerted by a team member that the gun had disconnected at the quick release and dropped directly into the sea.

Good Practice Guidance:

Familiarity with the equipment being used prior to commencing work is very important to ensure that all functioning parts are identified and understood. Pre-use checks were conducted however, the team did not identify the quick release connection mechanism. This then resulted in the quick release connection being used as a tethering point. It should be noted that the team thought they had adequately secured the gun correctly however, the lack of familiarisation resulted in the incident occurrence.