

Head Injury in Engine Room

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A Chief Engineer sustained a head laceration injury.

What happened?

A Chief Engineer sustained a head laceration injury after accidentally striking his head on the sharp edge of a lighting protection grille rod installed at a height of 168 cm in the engine room.

IOGP Life Saving Rules:



Bypassing safety controls



Line of fire



Location of lighting and lighting protection grille rod hazards.

Why did it happen?

- The head-room was low, and the lighting protection grille was lower still at 168 cm above deck, posing a physical hazard at head level.
- The “protective” grille was itself harmful, with sharp, unprotected rod ends which created a risk of laceration or impact injury.
- No adequate PPE (safety helmet) was worn at the time of the impact, increasing injury severity.
- This obvious hazard was overlooked during installation and routine checks following installation.

Learning

- Consider a hazard hunt to identify all snagging points (risk to head/body)
 - Could there be some you hadn't thought of, or that were missed the first time around?
 - Reassess familiar spaces, not just obvious major equipment areas. What about the mess, the corridor in the accommodation etc etc.
- Can the hazard be engineered or designed out – that's ideal but not always practical;
- Can some form of protective pad be applied?

- Can sharp edges or low-hanging objects be appropriately marked?
- Does everyone know about the hazard? Is it worth a reminder at the tool box talk? “Watch out when you go past here, there’s a low bit where you have to duck to get through.”
- Think through hazard awareness and reiterate PPE use (such as helmets in machinery spaces).

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