

LTI: rope under tension moved and hit person's hand

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A member of the crew suffered a serious hand injury when struck by a rope under tension.

What happened?

The incident occurred when equipment in the sea was being retrieved to deck. It was necessary to attach a winch rope to stabilize the equipment as it was hauled aboard. While the equipment was being maneuvered, the winch rope jumped the side of the slipway and snapped back hitting the injured person. He raised his hands as a brace and was struck in his right hand by the rope under tension.

An All Stop was called, and the crew member taken to the hospital for treatment. He was subsequently medevaced with the two smallest fingers of his right hand broken. Follow up examination indicated further complications which will require amputation of the distal tip of the right small finger.

IOGP Life Saving Rules:



Line of fire



What went wrong?

- The underlying causes were:
 - The equipment being recovered was moving around owing to sea conditions, causing the winch rope to move also.
 - It had been thought that this would be a safe zone as this has not happened before.
 - The injured person was stood in a hazard area not recognized as such – there was no “No go zone” outlined.
- The root causes were:
 - There was complacency and potential risks were not identified.
 - The vessel was not designed to handle equipment in the way it was being done.

Lessons and actions

- Situational awareness: take a new look at how work is taking place, and try to recognize previously unnoticed new situations that place crew members in the line of fire.
- Better identify and mitigate dynamic risks during operations – if necessary, adapt plans to the weather and environmental conditions.
- There was a review of the work instructions for this activity.
- A “No-Go Area” during recovery was implemented.
- This task was redesigned to remove the risk as far as was possible.

Members may wish to refer to

HSEQ Direct (<https://hseqdirect.com/>) has an excellent teaching resource on “[Avoiding hand injuries](#)”

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