

## Marine Safety Forum – Safety Flash 08-15

**Issued: 10<sup>th</sup> March 2008**

**Subject: Short Cuts Can Hurt**

A chief engineer was igniting a burning torch prior to cutting steel. He found he had forgotten to bring the correct ignition tool and, as a lighter was nearby, he used it instead. As the torch settings were preset very high, the flame was rather excessive and his fingers were burnt. He had taken off his gloves to use the lighter.



This is a good example of taking short cuts and a painful reminder of why it shouldn't be done.

- Short cuts in procedures or established practices can be dangerous and lead to injuries.
- Every job should be planned no matter how routine. In this case a complex risk assessment is not necessary but using a couple of minutes to think through the work is essential: 'Do I have the right tools?'; 'Have I set up the equipment correctly?'; 'Am I wearing the correct PPE?'
- Lighters should not be kept close when carrying out burning operations and especially not on one's person.
- Everyone on board should act in such a way as to be a role model to each other; Senior officers have an extra responsibility in this.