

Safety Alert

Number: 21-03

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Subject: Finger Injury During Rescue Boat Launch Drill

What Happened / Narrative

This safety alert is raised following a recent incident onboard a vessel. The drill of launching the rescue boat was initiated as part of the regulatory and company requirements. Risk Assessment and Toolbox Talk were conducted, and all participants were present. The rescue boat was on the water with the Chief Officer, IP and one AB on board. At the initial stages of the testing, the rescue boat control seemed to have issues which were aggravated by the outboard engine tilting up and down. The Master instructed the Chief Officer to shut down the outboard engine, and the IP went to do so but his right ring finger was caught between the engine frame and the transom of the boat. This pinch point caused the amputation of the tip of the IP's right ring finger. The engine was still in gear when the IP tried to shut it down. The IP was brought back on board and taken to the vessel hospital. First aid was provided, and the Operations Manager contacted shore base to initiate MEDEVAC.

Why Did it Happen / Cause

Root Cause:

- Failure to check the rescue boat prior to its operation

Contributing Factors:

- Outboard engine was left engaged which caused it to continue to tilt up and down.
- Lack of understanding the ongoing situation by the rescue boat crew.
- Lack of maintenance of the rescue boat.
- Outboard engine locking pin out of position.
- Missing split pin from the locking pin.
- Inadequate working gloves used although it could have only helped to reduce the seriousness of the injury – not confirmed but assumed.

People have good intentions but without evaluating the risks and understanding the situation, they are exposed to serious incidents. In this particular case, the IP tried to shut down the engine without considering the risks and the rest of his team failed to warn him about it. It is possible that the whole team did not understand what the situation at hand was.

Corrective Actions Taken / Recommendations

The analyzed root cause indicates that even with inadequate awareness, if the process for checking the equipment prior its use had been conducted, it should have avoided the unsafe condition to operate the rescue boat.

Photographs / Supporting Information



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