

KISH P & I LOSS PREVENTION CIRCULAR KPI-LP-40-2012 ***(An Accident with Disc Grinder & Lessons to be Learnt)***

The accident happened on an oil tanker as follows: A crewman was injured whilst using a power tool in an incorrect manner. He had been instructed by the C/E to clean paint and corrosion off the stud threads of a manhole cover in preparation for a tank entry.

He was instructed to perform this task using either a hand-held wire brush or an angle grinder fitted with a wire wheel. However, presumably because of excessive corrosion on the fasteners, he unilaterally decided to fit a 5mm cutting disk on the angle grinder instead of the wire wheel, and then proceeded to cut off the nuts of the studs securing the manhole cover. Suddenly, the grinding disk rotating at high speed jammed between two adjacent studs. The disk shattered. The detached piece was flung at great velocity and inflicted a bruise on the crewman's left shoulder after cutting through his coveralls & clothing.

► Result of investigation:

- 1-Existing company procedures and C/E's clear instructions were not followed;
- 2-Risk assessments were not conducted;
- 3-The crewman had received no training for this specific task and consequently demonstrated a lack of safety awareness that put himself, his colleagues and the vessel at risk.

► Lessons learnt:

- 1-Complacency in the use of power tools must be guarded against;
- 2-All persons involved in a task, from deck officers down to supervisors and ratings, must have a clear understanding of the nature of the task and safe work procedures;
- 3-All crew must understand the purpose and requirement for risk assessments for all routine and non-routine tasks;
- 4-All crew members must remember the importance of accepting personal responsibility for safety and that they all are empowered to stop work until safety concerns have been adequately resolved;
- 5-Shipboard training and familiarisation should include specific training on particular tasks and equipment.
- 7-The crew should generally be reminded that many accidents happen as the people try to make the jobs easier but in an unsafe manner and workmanship.