

KISH P & I LOSS PREVENTION CIRCULAR KPI-LP-124-2013
(A Kick-back from the Emergency Air Compressor & Lessons to be Learnt)

► **Description of the incident:**

An engineer was carrying out routine inspection and maintenance on the emergency air compressor including a start test. When starting the compressor by manually cranking, the engineer failed to remove the handle before the engine reached its self-ignition RPM speed. As a result, the handle was thrown off the crank engagement nub when the compressor began turning over on its own, hitting him in the face. The engineer suffered two chipped teeth and lacerations of his lip.

The vessel's investigation determined that the engineer was not fatigued at the time of the task. Additionally, he had carried out the same starting operation a number of times in the past. The compressor starting procedure was apparently followed during start-up, covering items such as leaving the compressor drain valve opened and operating the engine decompression lever at the time of testing.

► **Action taken:**

1. Suitable caution notice should be displayed near the unit to remind the operator of the danger.
2. The operator should receive specific training and be made aware of this danger when joining the vessel and before he/she carries out this test for the first time.
3. The operator should be positioned suitably and firmly and pay full attention at the time of crank-starting the compressor.

If all procedures were truly followed during this task; yet this accident still occurred. The residual risk would appear to be somewhat high. In that case, it may require a re-evaluation of the fundamental design or of the PPE necessary to accomplish this task, such as requiring a full face mask much like wood cutters in the forest industry.

