



Alert



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LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE

The shipbuilding and ship repair National Interest Group (NIG) members are committed to sharing and learning to drive down accident rates and ill health in the industry.

Title

Worker became trapped under hydraulic engine hatch which closed on them and could not be reopened. The hatch was not propped or isolated. It did not have any pressure relief device necessary to mitigate the consequences

Description

A boat builder was looking inside an engine hatch on a boat when a colleague, who thought they were no longer on board, asked for the hatch to be closed, trapping the worker at their chest area. He was unconscious for 10 minutes.

The hatch was powered by an electric driven hydraulic ram. The electric supply tripped out when crushing the worker and could not be reset to allow the hatch to be reopened. The hatch had to be cut off and manually lifted clear. Had it not been for the quick actions of colleagues, the injuries could have been life threatening.

Positive, successful outcomes and key learning

All engine hatches should contain a hatch prop(s) to prevent the unintentional lowering of the hatch during work activities. The prop(s) should be permanently retained by fixings that require a tool for their removal.



Suitable inline check valves local to each hydraulic cylinder should be installed to prevent the retraction of the hydraulic cylinders in the event of a loss of hydraulic pressure including hose failure. Suitable inline pressure relief device should also be fitted and appropriately set to prevent over pressurisation and/or pump overload.

Boat builders must have safe systems of work, isolation and operating procedures, information and instructions for operating engine hatches, and they must be made available to all internal and external personnel. These should explain the hazards and the control measures in place / to be used. These should include a hydraulic system diagram to assist future hatch operations.

Boat builders should consider retrofitting where their boats do not have suitable precautions in place.