



IRATA SAFETY BULLETIN SB13

SPARKING FROM A WIRE ANCHOR SLING

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This bulletin is for the attention of those responsible for operational rope access work and health and safety advisors.



A member working on an oil platform issued a non conformity / improvement opportunity report, after it was noticed that sparks had come from a galvanised wire anchor sling. Since the possibility of causing a spark is obviously to be avoided in any potentially explosive atmosphere the work was stopped. In a safe area, the sparking was replicated by rubbing the wires on a piece of rusty steel.

The possible cause of sparking is too complex to explain in this safety bulletin, but the following precautionary action is recommended.

Where the use of intrinsically safe equipment is a necessity, consideration should be given to the deployment of anchor slings made from man-made fibres, noting that they are significantly less resistant to heat, abrasion or chemicals than wire rope or chain.