



## IRATA SAFETY NOTICE SN15

# HOT-WORK INCIDENTS

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Note: some of the points in the investigation are covered by guidance in IRATA International Code of Practice [ICOP]. Annex M

- A common element in 'hot-work' incidents is inadequate training to use tools from ropes:

### M.6 Blasting, spraying and jetting from anchor lines

- *M.6.1 Before work commences, training is necessary to cover the precautions and techniques required to deal with the additional hazards of using high-pressure tools when associated with rope access, over and above standard safety measures for using this equipment on the ground.*
- *M.6.4 Where the reaction from the high-pressure tools could unbalance the rope access technician and cause an accident, subsidiary anchor lines should be used to tension the rope access technician in position.*
- **Incident 1** see M.5 Hot work
- *M.5.1 Care should be taken by the rope access technician to protect against potential personal injury while carrying out hot work, e.g. by sealing the gap between overalls and boots or sleeves and gloves to prevent hot material such as weld or grit entering.*
- **Incident 4** see M.1.5 Control measures should be implemented to minimize the potential for injury in the event of the rope access technician losing control of tools or equipment. Examples of control measures include self-actuating cut-off devices (so-called dead-man's handles) or rigging tools in such a way that, if control is lost, they swing away from the user.
- *M.5.2 For certain types of hot work, rope access equipment such as anchor lines and harnesses may need special protection, e.g. anchor lines could be protected in the immediate hot-work area by attaching heat resistant anchor line protectors around them.*

Replacing the metal hard-link with a non-conductive polyamide sling seems to ignore the fact that the hard link was used to minimise the chance of heat damaging polyamide anchor lines in the first place, which is a more likely occurrence than for that reported.

Good practice should ensure that the air supply to the gouging torch are drained and blown through before use. For added security a heat resistant anchor line protector could be added to any hard link used to give protection against damage to the working lines as well as providing electrical insulation.