

SAFETY FLASH 23-84: WINCHES

Be alert when winches are rotating. A finger between a rope that is being pulled tight can cause for permanent injury. It can even lead to a fatal accident.

GOOD PRACTICE

- ✓ Frequently check the state of the winches and keep up maintenance.
- ✓ Only let instructed personnel carry out the operation.
- ✓ Let others around you know what you are going to do and inform them about the dangers.
- ✓ Determine the safest place on board for you to operate the winch. Think of moving parts, obstacles, and that the rope can break (snapback zone).
- ✓ Provide a control by means of deadman switch. The button must be pressed to get the winch moving. When the button is released, the winch stops. Push-to-run.
- ✓ Be alert to the correct use of suitable PPE. Also think of the right size.
- ✓ Have enough turns of the ropes next to each other in order to have a good power distribution on the tension drum.
- ✓ Decouple the winch after usage.
- ✓ Perform a LMRA (Last Minute Risk Assessment).



BAD PRACTICE

- x Not giving instructions about the activation of the winches.
- x Quickly readjusting the rope.
- x With your hand or fingers near the rotating ropes.
- x Laying the rope over each other.
- x Not having your attention focused on the work.
- x Bad or no communication.
- x Not wearing PPE.
- x Wearing loose clothing (open coat, vest, loose sleeves, etc.) or hair.



ACTION QUESTIONS

- How does the winch work?
- What is a safe 'way' for the rope?
- How does the winch work onboard? What are the dangers? For example with an automatic winch.

