

LTI – Shoulder strain when crew member was descending the stairs

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A crew member sustained an injury to their shoulder as they were descending a flight of stairs into an ROV hangar.

What happened?

Whilst stepping over the coaming of the weather tight door, they lost their footing on the top step at which point they reached out grabbing the door mechanism to try and stabilize themselves. As their hand remained fixed to the mechanism, both legs and lower body slipped off the top step. This resulted in their entire body weight pulling abruptly against their stationary left arm. The sudden drop created stress and a severe "wrenching" force on the shoulder joint, resulting in the injury.



Why did it happen?

- **Task Demands** – Perceived time pressure (in a hurry) – A request was made for the individual to investigate a burst freshwater line. The crew member was rushing – even with good intentions, this increases exposure to hazards.
- **Work Environment** – The ROV hanger is open to the external elements. As a result of this, the area gathers condensation, contributing to slippery conditions. Slippery conditions in open hangars are a known persistent risk.
- **Work Environment** – Changes / Departures from routine. The crew member

entered the ROV hangar by a route not routinely used during operations.

What do we learn?

- Don't rush, even during urgent tasks
 - Could urgency affect your judgement and behaviour?
- Be aware of the hazards of stepping over high coamings while coming down the stairs
- Maintain three points on contact when using stairs
- Be aware of how environmental conditions (condensation, moisture) can make surfaces slippery
- Do you know all the different ways in and out of your workplace, and are you aware of any possible hidden risks?

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