Worker suffered eye injuries in electric arc incident

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A Vessel ETO (Electro-Technical Officer) sustained light burn injuries to the eyes.

IOGP Life Saving Rules:

- Bypassing safety controls
- Energy isolation

What happened?

A Vessel ETO (Electro-Technical Officer) sustained light burn injuries to the eyes (“arc-eye”) due to an electrical arc spike during disconnection of a shore power cable. The ETO reportedly switched off the breaker at the quayside and managed to disconnect the cable from vessel shore connection Junction box. When pulling out the cable, it appeared that cable was still energized from shore side and an electric arc occurred, causing light burn injury to the eyes.

What went wrong?

Our member’s initial findings show that there was inadequate communication between the vessel and the quayside shore power provider, including a lack of appropriate documentation.

What can we learn?

- Never assume that the power is off - always check the voltage with a certified tester. No cable is safe until it is tested and isolated.
- When handling power supply breakers, it may be good practice for two persons to be present.
- Communication between departments, between vessel and shore-side or dockyard personnel, between contractor and sub-contractor – can we work to improve how we communicate and pass vital information between

stakeholders?
    - Ensure there are appropriate risk assessments and toolbox talk for the any potentially hazardous activity.

Members may wish to refer to:

- IMCA video: Be prepared to work safely – electrical hazards

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