Diver entanglement – uncontrolled equipment in the water column

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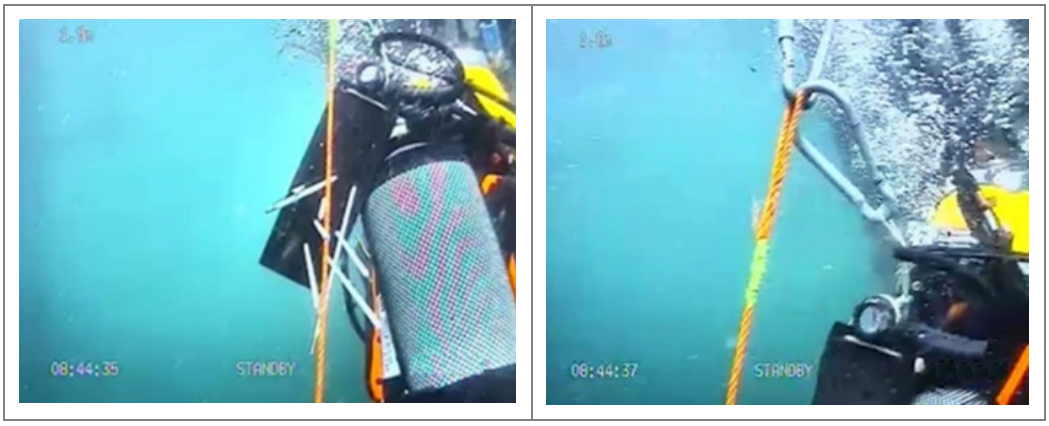
A diver hung a rubber mat with welding rods connected with a rope and carabiner to the rope suspending the welding cables resulting in a compromised work area.

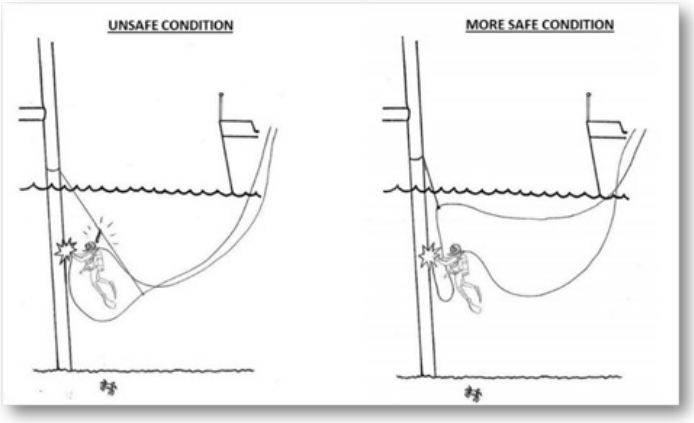
IOGP Life Saving Rules:

Line of fire

What happened?

A diver started work welding an anode to a piggy-back riser clamp at 1.5msw. When starting the job, the diver hung a rubber mat with welding rods connected with a rope and carabiner to the rope suspending the welding cables. It resulted in a compromised work area. Due to the swell at 1.5m depth the connected light weight items were floating uncontrolled in the water column.





What went right?

The diver stayed very calm and relaxed during the situation, as there was no time rush. Launch of stand-by diver was done properly and promptly according to Diver Launch and Recovery procedure including Emergency Recovery. The stand-by diver followed diver's umbilical and untangled the diver. The entanglement was

undone without exceeding the planned diving time.

What went wrong?

The first stage regulator of the bail-out bottle got entangled in the rope suspending the rubber mat with welding rods. The diver was unable to free himself. The stand-by diver was launched and freed the diver from the entanglement.

What was the cause?

- Improper placement of tools
  - loose ropes floating at the diver's working area.
  - tools positioned at approximately the same depth as the work position of the diver.
  - diver working close to water surface, where due to the swell the tools can have uncontrolled movements.

Lessons and actions

- Always avoid having loose rope floating around the diver's working area.
- Make sure that tools and equipment used on a job, whether during diving or otherwise, are not creating a restricted work area or a "blind spot".
- Special attention should be given when working close to the water surface due to swell and uncontrolled movement of the diver and his tools.
- Use of lockable carabiners to secure tools may be preferred.
- Situational awareness during planning and executing a diving task.