

# SAFETY ALERT



*The below information has been issued on behalf of the EFFC, to make others aware of the potential risks and possible precautions to take in order to avoid these.*

**Date/Time of Incident:**

February 2023

**Type of Incident:**

Personal Safety/Illness

**Nature of Incident/Injury:**

Finger of IP severed when caught between cage and lifting accessory

**Details of Incident:**

Work was being carried out in a confined working area in a basement of an existing building to install additional piles for an upgrade to the existing structure. Headroom was tight and with raking piles being installed some of the pile positions meant the auxiliary winch clashed with the columns in some places. One rig had the winch removed. The pile was drilled using a 235mm diameter auger and cased and then the 25mm diameter central Gewi bar was installed in 2.5m lengths using couplers. Once the central bar was installed the 9.6m long 170mm diameter reinforcing cage made from helical bar, which was in four sections connected together using bulldog clips, was being installed. The first three sections of the cage were installed. When placing the final section of pile reinforcing into the raking pile as the cage was lowered the cage snagged on one of the central Gewi bar couplers. The workforce had devised a process for freeing the cage by slackening off the lifting accessories, holding the cage and twisting anticlockwise. Whilst carrying out this action to free the snag the IP's finger got trapped between the cage and the lifting ancillary as the cage dropped past the snag point.

**Root cause (if known):**

Coupler snagged the cage IP had hands in line of fire Cage dropped. Hazard not identified nor adequately assessed

**Action Taken:**

Immediate amendment to complete pile was drawn up, agreed with the client and briefed to complete the pile.- Tool box talk and re-brief to sites to use mechanical aids to lift the cages into the bore & no hands to be placed onto suspended loads. - Review WPP RA and change working practice of manipulating cages with hands on the cage to a process that maintains a safe distance from the cage. - Design a tool with a hook to

manipulate the cage whilst keeping a safe distance. - Speak to manufacturer regarding spacer to deflect cage away from coupler to eliminate snagging. -

**Lessons Learnt:**

The incident and subsequent investigation has reinforced the importance of challenging work habits. Our leadership site interaction programme plays a pivotal role in challenging site practices considered to be low risk that sit outside of formal documented processes. - Reinforce the Stop Work Authority.