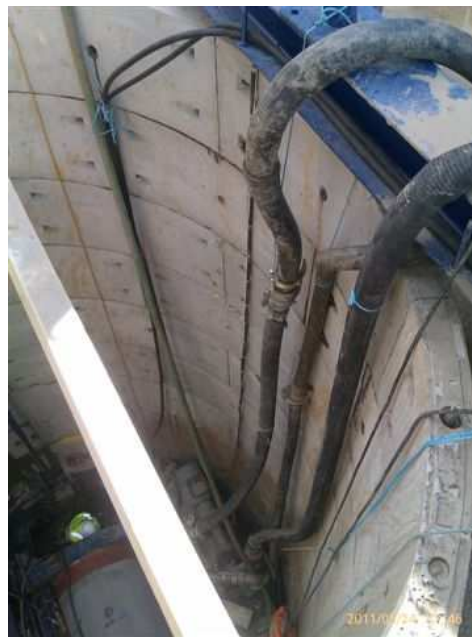


Eye protection

What Happened?

The operative was working at the bottom of the drive shaft on Sudbourne Road. His role was to monitor tunnelling equipment. As shown in the photographs, there are 100mm diameter flexible pipes that go down the side of the shaft, feeding and removing water from the tunnelling equipment. These pipes are rated to 16 bar, and the normal operating pressure is 0.5 bar on site. The flexible hose is connected to the metal coupling by crimping. The rubber hose came off the metal tail, and therefore the pipe discharged its flow into the shaft. The water hit the bottom of the shaft and bounced up into the injured person's face, getting dirt in his eye. The tunnelling operator immediately switched off the flow. First aiders washed the eye, it was still irritated the next day, but when checked out at the local hospital it was reported to be fine.



Lessons for the Group

The risk assessment for the task is to be reviewed. Flexible pipework entering a shaft is to have a clamp fitted as an extra precaution to manufacturer's recommendations. The pipework is to be more regularly inspected under the PUWER regime. Since the incident, the site has been visited by the client showing the importance of communication with the client in an accident investigation. The project is also reviewing the need for safety glasses and goggles. The need for operatives to wear safety glasses should be more widespread and considered within task specific risk assessments.

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