

## MSF: Air cylinder failure in lifeboat

### What happened

There was a structural failure of an air cylinder fitted in a lifeboat. It occurred without warning. No work had or was being conducted on or around the air cylinder. Three crew members working nearby were injured by the blast debris.

First aid treatment was provided onboard by the medic and they were then sent onshore that night for assessment by a local hospital, and later released.



### What was the cause?

The MSF notes that investigation into this incident is currently ongoing. This event – which occurred in July 2020 – was first brought to IMCA's attention last year. At that time there was insufficient information available to warrant its use in a Safety Flash. See here for the [MSF Safety Alert 21-01](#).

Two preliminary suspected causes of the cylinder failure have been identified:

- Galvanic corrosion between the cylinder material and the metal support frame leading to a weakness in the cylinder wall;
- Cylinders submerged in bilge water for extended period leading to wall corrosion which could have then affected the integrity.

## **Action**

The MSF's correspondent recommends that such cylinders are:

- Inspected annually for corrosion or wall damage by service providers;
- Hydrostatic [pressure] tested at a required interval of five years.