

# Do you like your hands?

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ANDREW BROOK

## Lewmar investigates hand-severing incident

**W**inch Manufacturer Lewmar Ltd warns against using self-tailer for lifting persons. Lewmar has launched an investigation into the accident that left a woman without her hand after operating one of its winches.

As reported in the current May issue of YM, the Venezuelan woman was winching her husband up the mast of their Amel 54 in Jolly Harbour, Antigua, when a riding turn developed on the foot-operated self-tailing winch.

Trying to free the jam, one of the woman's hands was severed and the other was crushed and John Ahlgren, a 63-year-old Norwegian sailor, who rushed to help her, also lost seven fingers. One onlooker said the scene resembled 'an abattoir with body parts all over the cockpit'.

Lewmar's safety notice said: 'Under no circumstances should any self-tailing winch be used in self-tailing mode for any lifting operation.

'Suitable and adequate manual tailing should be arranged with proper means of manually cleating or stopping the hoist.

'Only persons who are completely familiar with the controls and those who have been fully made aware of the correct use of the winch should be allowed to use it.'