



Marine Notice 2/2014
Supersedes 9/2008

AMSA Inspectors Entering Lifeboats

Lifeboat release incidents

The maritime industry has in recent years been aware of incidents occurring world-wide in relation to lifeboat release arrangements.

Predominately, Port State Control (PSC) and Flag State Control (FSC) detentions relating to this subject have been for defective maintenance of the equipment. This equipment is often designed in such a way that maintaining clearances between moving parts and proper maintenance to these lifeboats is absolutely critical.

AMSA notes that there has been a reduction in lifeboat accidents, which is likely due to improved awareness of the problem and the introduction of interim measures such as fall prevention devices.

Further improvements in safety outcomes are anticipated from the more permanent measures being introduced, such as the replacement of on-load release mechanism that do not meet the current IMO standard. Replacement must be completed no later than the first scheduled dry-docking after 1 July 2014, but not later than 1 July 2019.

However, vigilance still needs to be maintained to prevent further lifeboat accidents.

Use of additional restraints during inspections

As a result AMSA has instructed its inspectors that they should not rely on the boat harbour pins and gripes if an inspector is to enter a lifeboat - unless it can be demonstrated to the AMSA inspector that lifeboat release arrangements are correctly set. If this is unable to be demonstrated, additional restraints are required to be fitted.

The AMSA inspector will discuss such requirements with the master of the vessel early in a PSC or FSC inspection to avoid unnecessary delays. It is the responsibility of the master NOT the AMSA inspector to determine a suitable supplementary restraint arrangement, however, the AMSA inspector must be satisfied with the method used before entering the lifeboat.

This requirement is for entry into the lifeboat when fully housed ONLY. The arrangement is to be removed immediately upon completion of the lifeboat inspection and under NO circumstances is the lifeboat to be swung out with the supplementary restraint fitted.

This requirement is a control mechanism that AMSA has implemented to reduce the AMSA inspector's exposure to risk and the cooperation of all owners, operators and masters is appreciated.

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