

IAMSA BUREAU OF SHIPPING LLC**TECHNICAL DEPARTMENT**

TO: All surveyors, Masters, Representatives

SUBJECT: Accidents on lifeboat drills

PURPOSE: Preventive action request on boat drills

APPLICATION: All boat drills

INTRODUCTION:

1.0 A deck officer has recently died in another lifeboat incident, in which a lifeboat fell from the embarkation level after the hooks were disengaged from the falls during an abandon-ship drill.

The lifeboat hooks involved in this case were the type that has safety pins and marks that indicate when the hook is correctly set in the locked position. This incident occurred on the recovery of the lifeboat after the abandon-ship drill, and the investigation report suggests that the aft hook was incorrectly set when the boat was in the water prior to recovery.

It appears the crew was not familiar with the operation of the lifeboat hooks and unaware of the significance of the small reset lever at the base of the hook and of the importance of aligning the green marks. The crew member who operated the aft hook was unable to recall if the marks were aligned when the hooks were engaged and the lifeboat recovered, nor could he recall the position of the reset lever.

This is another incident that highlights the importance of crew familiarity with the operating instructions and functionality of lifeboat hooks. Ships' officers must ensure they fully understand the manufactures' instructions and, then, show the crew the proper use of hooks.

It is important to relate operating instructions and diagrams to actual hooks, and it is recommended that ships' crew show the locking of hooks and manual releasing of hooks, with the boat not attached to the falls, i.e., once the boat has been lowered to the water and released from the falls.

It is understood that manufactures' instructions are often unclear and images are sometimes of poor quality, as if they have been photocopied or scanned. In situations like this, the manufactures should be contacted and requested to provide better instructions.

MANDATORY REQUIREMENT:

Surveyors should check the instructions manual and verify if the crew is familiar with the operation of the boat before start the drill.

1. Check to make sure the releasing mechanisms are working correctly and
2. Ensure the crew is properly trained in the use of this equipment.

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