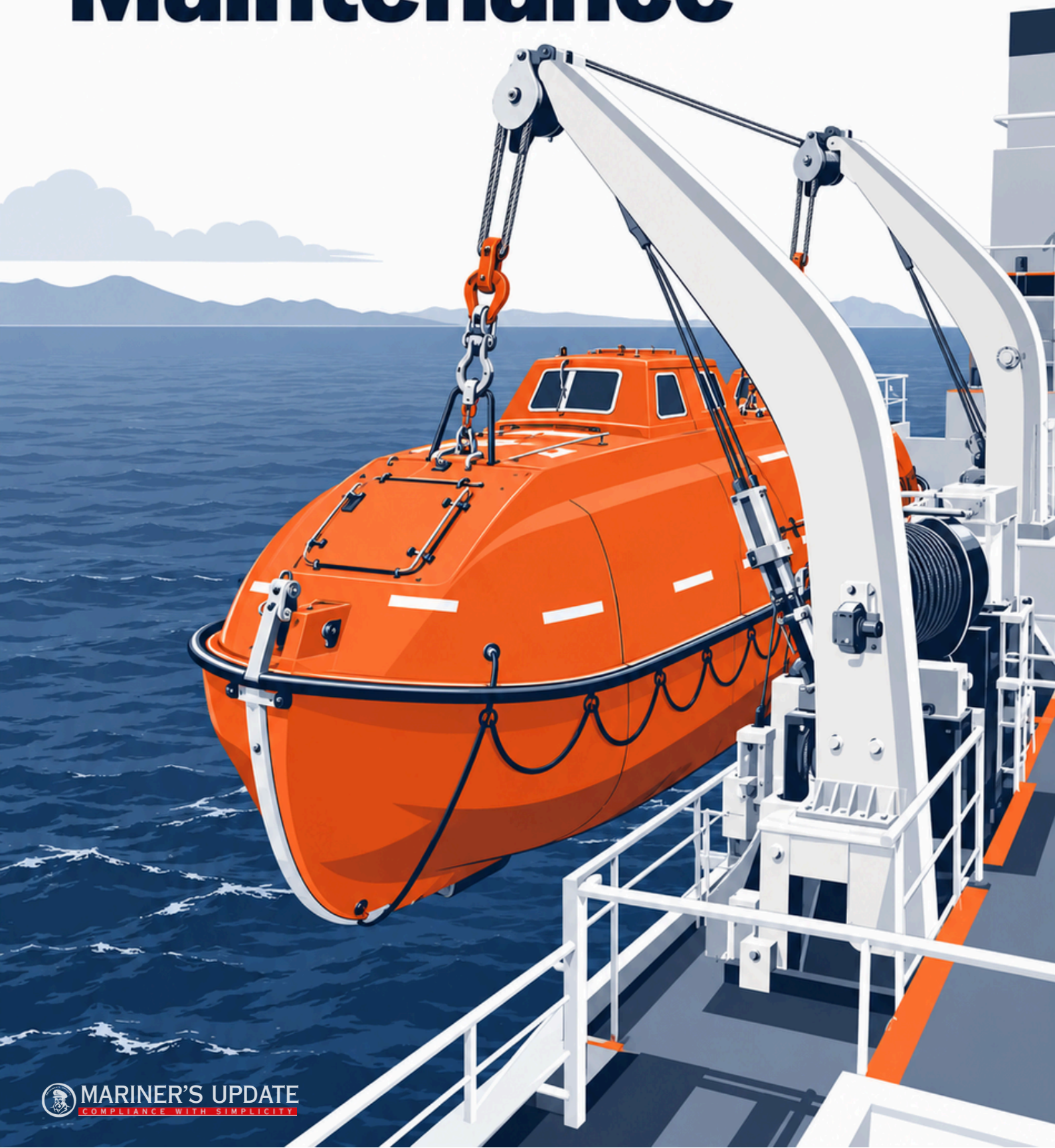


TECHNICAL CIRCULAR – WK 41

Lifeboat & Davit Maintenance



LIFEBOAT & DAVIT MAINTENANCE

A lifeboat is only as reliable as its last inspection. A technical refresher on keeping launching appliances ready for the day they are needed.

- Topic** Lifeboat, davit, falls, hook and release gear maintenance
- Applies To** All vessels fitted with lifeboats and launching appliances
- Why Now** Many lifeboat accidents occur during drills and maintenance, not emergencies



Lifeboats sit idle for long periods, exposed to salt, sun and weather. Wire falls corrode, sheaves seize, hydraulics leak and release hooks wear internally, often with little to see from outside. When a lifeboat is finally launched, whether in a drill or a real emergency, any hidden weakness in the launching chain is tested all at once.

Hook release gear deserves particular attention. An unintended release or a hook that will not release as intended can have severe consequences, so the condition of hooks and their operating mechanisms should never be taken for granted.



ROUTINE INSPECTION CHECKLIST

- Inspect falls for corrosion, broken strands, kinks and wear, and confirm they are end-for-ended or renewed within the required interval.
- Check davit arms, sheaves, pins and winch brakes for free movement, lubrication and signs of cracking or wear.
- Examine on-load and off-load release hooks, cables and interlocks, and confirm the reset position is fully engaged before hoisting.
- Start and run the lifeboat engine, check fuel, battery, bilge pump and steering, and confirm the water spray or air system works where fitted.
- Record all inspections, defects and servicing in the lifesaving appliance log and planned maintenance system.





FOUR RULES WORTH REPEATING

Rule	Reminder
Know the hook	Every crew member handling the release gear should understand how the hook locks, releases and resets. Follow the maker's instructions every time.
Secure before testing	Fit the hook safety pins or locks before any maintenance on the boat while it hangs from the davit or is being lowered.
Never skip the drill	Drills expose seized gear and weak points. Treat them as the best test of readiness, and plan them carefully.
Report defects early	A stiff sheave or sluggish brake today can be a failed launch tomorrow. Log it, tag it and fix it before the next use.

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