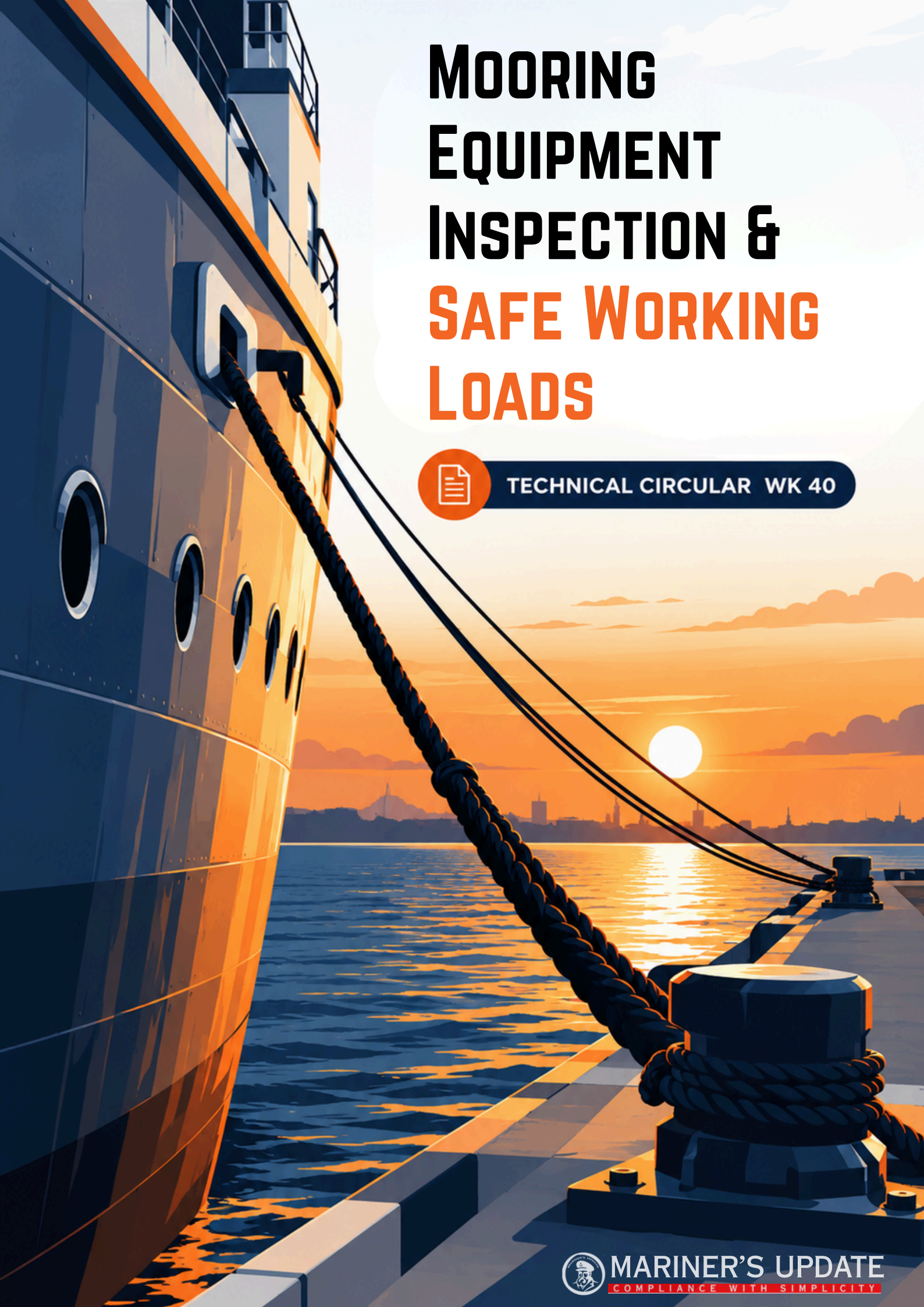


An illustration of a ship's hull on the left, with several thick black mooring ropes extending from it towards the right. The ropes are secured to a dark blue metal structure on a pier. The background shows a calm body of water reflecting the warm orange and yellow light of a sunset. A city skyline is visible in the distance under a sky with soft clouds. The overall scene is peaceful and industrial.

MOORING EQUIPMENT INSPECTION & SAFE WORKING LOADS



TECHNICAL CIRCULAR WK 40



MARINER'S UPDATE
COMPLIANCE WITH SIMPLICITY

MOORING EQUIPMENT INSPECTION & SAFE WORKING LOADS

Worn, overloaded or poorly maintained mooring gear remains a leading cause of serious injury on deck. A technical refresher on inspection and SWL limits.

<u>Topic</u>	Mooring line, winch & fitting inspection; safe working load (SWL) compliance
<u>Applies To</u>	All vessel types conducting mooring operations
<u>Why Now</u>	Snap-back and line failure remain among the most severe recurring deck injuries



Why This Still Matters

Mooring lines, wires and fittings degrade steadily through UV exposure, abrasion, repeated loading and corrosion — often without obvious outward signs until the point of failure. A line or fitting loaded beyond its safe working load, or weakened by undetected wear, can part suddenly and recoil with enough force to cause fatal injury within the snap-back zone.

Safe working load is not a theoretical figure — it is the maximum load a piece of equipment may carry in normal service, already reduced from breaking load by a built-in safety margin. Exceeding it, or using mismatched or degraded gear, removes that margin entirely.



Routine Inspection Checklist

- Inspect mooring lines and wires for chafe, abrasion, discolouration and reduction in diameter before and after each use.
- Check that SWL markings on winches, bollards, fairleads and fittings are legible and match the equipment in use.
- Confirm mooring lines are matched in type and condition — do not mix old and new line on the same drum.
- Inspect winch brakes, clutches and render/recover settings against the vessel's mooring equipment plan.
- Record all inspections, defects and replacements in the deck log and equipment register.

Four Rules Worth Repeating

Rule	Reminder
Never exceed SWL	A line or fitting's SWL is a hard limit, not a target. Using higher-rated gear than the weakest component in the system gives a false sense of margin.
Respect the snap-back zone	Keep all personnel clear of the snap-back zone during line handling under tension — a parted line can travel faster than it can be avoided.
Retire, don't repair	A line showing significant wear, cuts or heat damage should be taken out of service, not patched or kept “for light duty.”
Follow the mooring plan	Use the vessel-specific mooring arrangement and line composition the equipment plan calls for — don't improvise substitutions under time pressure.

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