



## **Safety Alert 05**

### **Inspection and maintenance of lifeboats**

#### **What happened?**

Recent events on Norwegian facilities have highlighted the need for appropriate design and manufacturing regimes, coupled with robust inspection, and maintenance processes for lifeboats. Two unrelated events have occurred:

- Possible design and manufacturing deviations have been identified in a certain type of freefall lifeboat, and;
- Inspections of some conventional twin fall davit launched lifeboats have revealed structural integrity issues in the load paths of several boats.

Both occurrences were identified as serious issues, and led to total shutdown of production, and partial de-manning of the platform(s) involved. Whilst the number of freefall boats on Australian offshore facilities is limited, the availability of a lifeboat, be it freefall, or single or twin fall davit launched, must be ensured. The boat's structural integrity must be maintained, and the performance standards identified in the safety case for these essential safety critical items must be complied with.

#### **What went wrong?**

In the freefall boat event, cracks were noted in the canopy and superstructure of the freefall boats(s) after a routine launch. This led to questions of structural integrity of the boats, which were withdrawn from service, pending investigations by operator and vendor.

In the davit launched boat event, testing of the boats revealed defects in the lowering arrangements of the boats. Further investigations also revealed corrosion of components in the load path, resulting in structural integrity questions. These boats were also withdrawn from service, pending an investigation. This investigation has not yet been completed.

NOPSA SAFETY ALERT 05 cont'd

## **Key Lessons**

Initial validation of the design and manufacture of key safety critical equipment is an important factor in ensuring availability of such equipment.

The ongoing availability of such equipment must be ensured by robust inspection, testing and maintenance regimes. Where there is a possibility of 'latent' faults remaining undiscovered, (for example corrosion on key structural components), due perhaps to inaccessibility to the components, then the regime must take account of this. More invasive techniques, or more frequent inspections, may be required to allow continued assurance of availability.

For more details, see the following links:

[http://www.ptil.no/English/Helse+miljo+og+sikkerhet/Sikkerhet+og+arbeidsmiljo/5\\_livbaatproblemer\\_veslefrikk.htm](http://www.ptil.no/English/Helse+miljo+og+sikkerhet/Sikkerhet+og+arbeidsmiljo/5_livbaatproblemer_veslefrikk.htm)

<http://www.statoil.com/STATOILCOM%5CSVG00990.nsf/UNID/41256A3A0055DD32C125704A0045976F?opendocument>

Recent information from AMSA re lifeboats on ships is also given below:

[http://www.amsa.gov.au/Shipping\\_Safety/Port\\_State\\_Control/Focused\\_Inspection\\_Campaigns/Phase8.asp](http://www.amsa.gov.au/Shipping_Safety/Port_State_Control/Focused_Inspection_Campaigns/Phase8.asp)

NOPSA intend to include a review of lifeboat inspection and maintenance regimes in forthcoming offshore visits to facilities.

## **Contact**

For further information email [alerts@nopsa.gov.au](mailto:alerts@nopsa.gov.au) and quote Alert 05