
Launching Appliances - Replacement Intervals for Synthetic Fibre Rope Falls

Notice to all Recognised Organisations, Ship Owners, Ship Operators, Ship Managers, Ships' Officers and Surveyors.

This Unified Interpretation should be read in conjunction with Regulation 20.4 of SOLAS Chapter III and IMO Resolution MSC.402 (96).

This REG-UI remains extant until rescinded.

Summary

This Red Ensign Group Unified Interpretation (REG-UI) has been published to advise of the REG's decision regarding the required replacement intervals for synthetic fibre rope falls.

1. Introduction:

1.1 REG policy permits the use of synthetic fibre rope falls for both LSA (as an equivalence to LSA Code, Chapter VI, Section 6.1.2.3) and non-LSA launching appliances installed onboard those vessels which are certificated in accordance with the applicable requirements of the REG Yacht Code.

1.2 Experience confirms that this policy has been well received by Industry and widely adopted. The provision of synthetic fibre rope falls onboard large yachts is now commonplace and has been for many years.

1.3 Noting the absence of any prescriptive Statutory regulations and evidence of safe operational history regarding the use of such materials in the marine environment, the REG had previously adopted a policy requiring such falls to be renewed at intervals not exceeding eighteen months. It was however noted that since this policy was first adopted, a number of Recognised Organisations have now published Regulations for launching appliances which include prescriptive criteria regarding the use of such materials.

1.4 Concerns have been raised by Industry regarding the impracticalities and commercial implications associated with the eighteen-month replacement intervals, noting that the most appropriate time to renew such falls would be during the annual attendance by an Authorised Service Provider (ASP).

1.5 Noting the above and the experience gained to date with respect to safe operational history, the REG has concluded that an extension of the renewal interval to no more than 24 months in order to align with the annual attendance by ASP's and Surveyors is considered appropriate, subject to compliance with the criteria outlined below.

2. Conditions for Acceptance:

2.1 Synthetic fibre rope falls shall be designed with a Factor of Safety on the basis of the maximum working load assigned and the ultimate strengths of the materials used for construction. The required Factor of Safety shall be at least 7.5 or in accordance with the Rules of a Recognised Organisation (whichever is higher).

2.2 Synthetic fibre ropes including the details of any splicing and terminal connections shall comply with the requirements of a Recognised Organisation, be certified accordingly and be suitable for the specific application for which they are proposed.

2.3 The provision for the use of synthetic fibre rope falls and this UI regarding their replacement intervals is limited to those vessels certificated in accordance with the REG Yacht Code only.

3. Periodical Inspection:

3.1 The weekly and monthly tests and inspections as required by Regulations 20.6 and 20.7 of SOLAS Chapter III shall be carried out onboard under the direction of a senior ships officer.

3.2 The thorough examination of synthetic fibre rope falls for man riding launching appliances (both LSA and non-LSA) shall be undertaken by an ASP in accordance with the applicable requirements of IMO Resolution MSC.402 (96).

3.3 In lieu of compliance with the above paragraph, launching appliances installed onboard vessels of less than 500GT may be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of Part A, 13.4 (3) (g) of the REG Yacht Code (2024 Edition).

3.4 The inspection of launching appliances including their synthetic fibre rope falls during periodical surveys shall be dealt with by the attending Surveyor in accordance with standard survey procedures.

4. Requirements regarding Replacement Intervals:

4.1 Synthetic fibre rope falls shall be replaced at intervals specified either by the manufacturer, the Rules of the applicable Recognised Organisation or 24 months, whichever is less. It shall, however, be noted that the aforementioned provisions are subject to ensuring that no defects are identified during the periodical inspection regime outlined in section 3 above that would require their replacement any sooner.

4.2 Where replacement intervals are based on the number of operating cycles, records of the same shall be maintained and kept onboard as part of the mini-ISM or ISM system as applicable.

More Information

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