

Marine Safety Flash

A16-09 (29th February)



Embarkation Ladder Failure

Whilst conducting a routine inspection of life saving appliances, the crew noticed that one of ropes on the embarkation ladder was severed (cause unknown). A new embarkation ladder was ordered and as an interim measure the crew inserted a long splice repair on the ladder to render it serviceable.



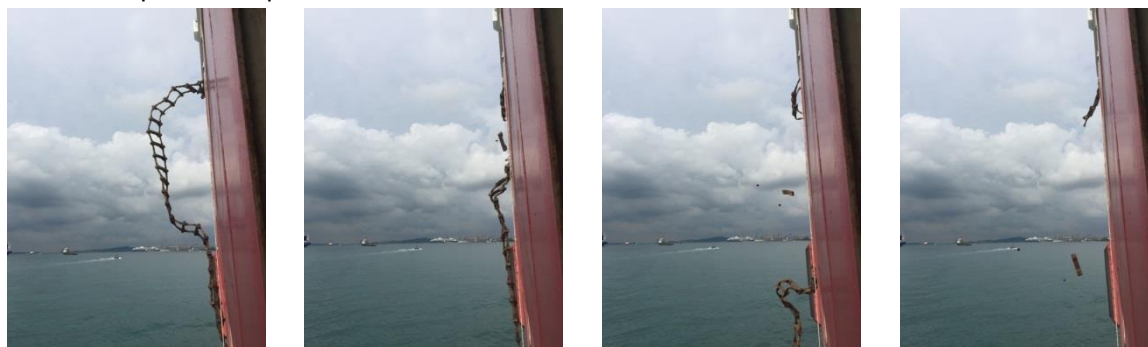
During the splicing the whole ladder was inspected and appeared (visually) to be in a very good condition. The vessel's ladders are 3 years old, original from a new build. They were covered with a standard plastic canvas cover that offered protection from UV degradation, while allowing the fibre rope to breathe, so that tropical condensation would not build up & rot the rope.



Once the replacement embarkation ladder arrived the Master elected to undertake a drill and deploy the old ladder, rolling it over the side in the manner which would reasonably be expected. As the ladder unfurled and the weight of the ladder came into effect, the ladder parted at the top rung. It had to be retrieved via a small messenger that was attached as a recovery precaution.



Subsequently a test was conducted on the port side ladder and a camera was utilised to capture the result. The picture sequence below shows the results of the trial.



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Recommendations

- Recommend conducting inspections of all embarkation ladders and to deploy the ladders over the side at the earliest opportunity (as operations permit).
- A review of the PMS to include a job for deploying the embarkation ladders over the side, to thoroughly inspect and to report any findings.