

Routine test of lifeboat launch results in fatalities

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On the Auger platform in the Gulf of Mexico during routine testing, a lifeboat fell into the sea with two persons on board. Both were fatally injured.

What happened?

The incident occurred during a routine and mandatory test of a lifeboat launch and retrieval capabilities. It included testing of the centrally operated release mechanism, which detaches the lifeboat from the lifting mechanism. On completion of the test, the lifeboat was being recovered to its launching davits.

On reaching a height above the water of approximately 25-30 metres, the lifeboat support point released causing the lifeboat to swing in a pendulum fashion. The forward support point then separated, and the lifeboat fell to the sea.

This incident is still being investigated and any findings must necessarily wait upon that investigation.

IOGP Life Saving Rules:



Bypassing safety controls



Work authorisation



Recommendations

Members may wish to:

- Suspend all testing involving launching and recovery of lifeboats where the lifeboat is manned.
- Suspend all maintenance and training requiring a person or persons to be inside lifeboats, unless the lifeboat is thoroughly and comprehensively secured in the davits by launch prevention devices.

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