



CHOOSING YOUR LIFEBOAT INSPECTION PROVIDER

Lifeboat Inspection 402 ↓
5 facts



Robert Wallace, Global Technical Sales Manager, establishes the need-to-know facts before choosing your lifeboat inspection provider

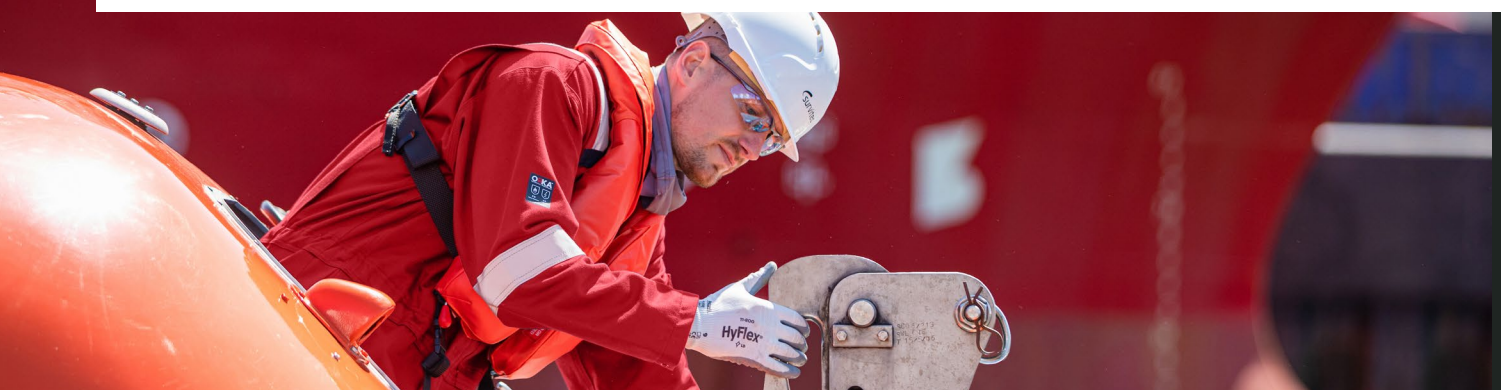
1. MULTI-BRAND INSPECTION PROVIDERS MAKE LIFE EASIER

Customers often ask if it's better to use the original equipment manufacturer (OEM) or a multi-brand inspection provider. Firstly, the lifeboat equipment onboard your vessel is likely to come from a number of manufacturers. This means that procuring a lifeboat inspection can involve liaison with a multitude of manufacturers demanding different services on the davit, the hooks and the boat itself.

Secondly, even if the key components come from the same supplier, they will still have acquired the engine, winch, wires and other key parts of the lifeboat and davit system from a wide range of suppliers. In this respect, Original Equipment Assembler (OEA) is a more accurate designation.

Thirdly, this doesn't take into account the complexity of multiple vessels with different lifeboat and rescue boat makes and types which are all manufactured by different suppliers.

Using a multi-brand service provider eliminates the need to speak to multiple companies and allows you to use one provider to facilitate all of your inspection needs. A multi-brand service provider also has an added benefit as they are able to inspect a number of makes and lifeboat types, they are uniquely positioned to implement best practice and experience from across the board rather than just what one manufacturer dictates.



2. THE IMPORTANCE OF A LOCAL SERVICE PROVIDER

Technology may mean we can communicate with people around the world at the click of a button, but differences in time-zones, languages, rules and customs still make international trade a challenge.

This is why you should seek a provider that knows the local market and who can coordinate and translate this in to your familiar habitat. For example, a customer sitting in Tokyo ordering a lifeboat inspection in Rio de Janeiro can be complicated. With a 12 hour time-difference, two different languages and many local rules and regulations adds to the complexity. A local service station knows the local requirements and will make sure that the job is completed

in accordance with them. Ordering the service through a local customer service in Japan, enables the company to deal with a coordinator who knows their business, speaks their language and who can invoice them in their local currency to their regular account.

Ships have their own agents of course, on whom the ships rely on for certain matters, but having specialist, local engineers supported by a global standard and infrastructure, both helps to ensure the quality and continuity of the service provided. Additionally, there can be significant cost-saving benefits to the customer, as it helps to reduce and eliminate travel costs.



Annual thorough examinations and operational tests, as described in section 6.2, shall be conducted by certified personnel of either the manufacturer or an authorised service provider in accordance with section 7 and section 8.

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3. REDUCE YOUR REGULATORY BURDEN

Having a lifeboat service provider that can manage your regulatory due dates will help reduce the administrative burden from your day-to-day operations. Service providers should give reminders on a 90, 60 and 30 day count down to your inspection due dates. Working together with your service partner, will give you one less headache to focus on.

Large service providers often closely liaise with the relevant regulatory bodies and while the legal status of regulatory

matters rests with the client in all cases, this does put larger providers in a strong position to assist and support you when discussing these requirements.

Additionally, larger providers are able to support your process through the obtaining of Flag State authorisations and Class society approvals to attend, which results in fewer arrangements and permissions, easing the logistical burden for you.

4. REDUCING YOUR TOTAL COST OF OWNERSHIP

The most important feature of a lifeboat inspection is of course to ensure that the lifeboat is fully functioning and ready for use in an emergency. However, there is no denying that cost is also a crucial element. Using the OEM may feel safe, but is often expensive and can be cumbersome depending on the number of equipment suppliers you have. Quotes and order confirmations from OEM approved inspection providers often come with a small asterisk – “OEM certification fee applies”, something that adds to your inspection cost.

Using smaller local service stations often has the lowest cost on paper, but with varying standards it can also prove risky in confrontation with Class, Flag and port state controls, not to mention if an accident should occur.

A multi-brand, Class approved and Flag authorised service provider gives you the benefit of the safe middle ground. It may not always be the cheapest solution, but offers less risk and reduced workload, resulting in the lowest total cost of inspection and ownership.



5. MEETING ALL OF YOUR SAFETY NEEDS

Keeping your ship compliant involves a wide range of safety equipment, not only lifeboats. Using a service provider who is also able to conduct service on your fire systems, liferafts, personal protection and loose safety equipment through one point of contact significantly reduces your operational burden and coordination need. With cross-trained engineers, these suppliers also have more flexibility and can reduce the number

of service visits for your vessel.

Finally, there are of course cost saving opportunities that can be made through using a sole supplier for your safety needs. Choosing a complete safety solutions provider to fulfil all of your safety requirement can offer significant cost savings and help to reduce your work load and regulatory burden, freeing you up to concentrate on other areas of your business.



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