1. **PURPOSE**

To define the procedural steps for the safe launch and recovery of the ship's rescue boat.

2. **SCOPE**

This procedure is applicable to those crew members assigned to man, launch, and recover the rescue boat.

3. **RESPONSIBILITY**

The primary responsibility for this procedure lies with the Third Mate, who is in command of the rescue boat and responsible for its maintenance, under the supervision of the Chief Mate.

4. **PROCEDURE**

4.1 **PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS**

The normal man / launch / recover team will consist of (6) persons. Namely, (3) to man the boat, (1) of these being the Third Mate in charge overall, (1) to operate the davit, and (2) to tend the bow and stern tag lines.

4.2 **LAUNCHING PREPARATIONS**

When the abandon ship signal is sounded, the rescue boat will be the first piece of gear deployed. Several steps will take place simultaneously:

(1) The Third Mate will report to the boat with a handheld VHF and the outboard motor key, taking charge of the situation.

(2) The boat crew and the tag line tenders will work together to ungrip the boat and lead out the tag lines.

(3) The ship's helmsman will report on scene, delivering (1) SART and (1) GMDSS emergency radio. He will then lead the bow painter forward and secure it.

(4) The Third Mate and the boat crew will ensure that the battery switch is on, the lifting hook is fully engaged, the lifting straps are correctly placed, the painter is correctly led out, and the outboard motor key is in place.

(5) The boat crew will then get out of the boat. The Third Mate will confirm with the davit operator and the tag line tenders that they are ready. At this point, the Third Mate will report to the bridge via VHF that the rescue boat is ready to launch.

4.3 **LAUNCHING**

When the command from the bridge to launch is given, the Third Mate will order the davit operator to hand crank the boat off the cradle while the tag line tenders control the sway. The Third Mate will then order the davit handcrank stowed and the (2) boat crew members to unpin the boat cradle, allowing the boat to swing outboard. Under the command of the Third Mate, the davit operator will swing the boat outboard under power and lower it to the 01 deck level by easing off the brake. The tag line tenders will frap the boat tightly to the deck edge and the rescue boat crew will board. The Third Mate will then report to the bridge that the rescue boat is ready to lower.

4.5 **DISCONNECT**
Once in the water, the lifting gear release hook is opened by pulling on the release lanyard. The design of the hook is such that it will be impossible to release the hook when there is more than a 100kg load. The motor will be started and the tag lines will be hauled back aboard the ship. When the motor is operating to the satisfaction of the Third Mate, the quick release hook on the bow painter will be opened by the bow crewman and the boat will be free to maneuver.

4.6 RECOVERY

The rescue boat will maneuver to the bow painter which will be hanging from the ships bow chock. The quick release hook will be engaged and the boat will ease back to the recovery area. The tag lines will be lowered and connected, bow and stern. When the rescue boat is stabilized, the davit operator will lower the lifting hook. Depending on conditions, this is most likely when the motor will be secured and raised. **It is absolutely critical that when the lifting hook is closed, the lock pin is fully engaged with the hook piece. This can be confirmed by observing the lock pin inspection hole on the side of the hook for complete metal to metal contact.** When the Third Mate is satisfied with the lifting gear arrangement, the davit operator will hoist the boat. The tag line tenders will take up the slack and keep a slight strain. When the boat reaches the 01 Deck level, the hoisting will stop and the tag line tenders will frap the boat tightly to the deck edge. The rescue boat crew will then disembark.

4.7 STOWAGE

Under the direction of the Third Mate, the davit operator will hoist the boat and slew it as close to the cradle as power operations will allow. The tag line tenders will concentrate on maintaining control of the boat. At this point, the davit operator will switch to hand crank mode for both final hoisting and slewing. The boat will be positioned over the cradle with the davit operator being assisted by marks on the davit base. The boat crew will close and pin the cradle. Under the direction of the Third Mate, the davit operator will lower the boat in place by easing off the brake. The boat crew and tag line tenders will gripe down the boat, stow the tag lines, and stow the bow painter. The SART and GMDSS radio will be returned to the bridge. The outboard motor will be flushed with fresh water and secured. The battery switch will be set to off.

5. RECORDS

As per CFR 199.190 (d), the rescue boat and its launching appliance will be visually inspected weekly. Also on a weekly basis, the outboard motor will be run for not less than 3 minutes. As per CFR 199.190 (e), A monthly inspection of the rescue boat will be made to make sure the appliance and the equipment are complete and in good working order. The Third Mate shall be responsible for the documentation of these inspections and tests.

6. TRAINING

As per CFR 199.180 (7) “As far as is reasonable and practicable, rescue boats, other than lifeboats which are also used as rescue boats, must be launched with their assigned crew aboard and maneuvered in the water each month. Such launching and maneuvering must occur at least once every 3 months”. As per CFR 199.180 (8) “If the lifeboat and rescue boat launching drills are carried out with the vessel making headway, such drills must, because of the dangers involved, be practiced in sheltered waters only and be under the supervision of an officer experienced in such drills".