



BACKGROUND ON EVACUATION SYSTEMS ON OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS FACILITIES

Examples of key initiatives that speak to the amount of work that has been done on developing safe and effective evacuation systems for offshore oil and gas facilities:

- Governments have enacted legislation that require 200% lifeboats located appropriately to improve launch capability. In addition, the regulations now require 100% davit launched life rafts and 200% immersion suits.
- Legislation also prescribes the standards for escape, evacuation and rescue, including requirements for operators to provide effective means of escape and rescue from all working and living areas to a place of safety and to evacuation systems. It also requires that operators assure that these systems are integrated into an overall effective escape, evacuation and rescue system by providing necessary training, procedures, maintenance, exercises, drills, overall and installation specific emergency response plans, etc.
- The C-NLOPB has gone beyond regulatory prescription. Each of the Board's decisions on Development Plan Applications has dealt with evacuation systems. Through these decisions and its guidance, the Board requires all operators demonstrate that the best practicable evacuation technology available is used on offshore installations in the Newfoundland and Labrador offshore area. Thus, innovations like Preferred Orientation and Displacement system (PROD) and Freefall Boats have improved launch performance.
- Prior to issuing an authorization, the C-NLOPB reviews these measures and additional requirements such as, an industry supplied helicopter rescue capability and enhanced standby vessel requirements.

In terms of research and development, Canadian Government organizations have funded research that has led to developments, such as:

- The PROD system and Seascope systems of evacuation;
- Research into model testing and its use in the evaluation of evacuation systems;
- The development of a lifeboat training simulator;
- An improved on-load release hook design;
- Life raft survivability and tracking.

The foregoing does not include a great deal of research and development that is on-going.