

FIRST IN FREEFALL

Martin Verhoef, Vice President of Verhoef tells us about their commitment to further develop freefall lifeboats, both in design and production, as well as, continuing to introduce new safety requirements for freefall lifeboats.





Overheight test with Verhoef, the test was carried out at a height of 42.00 meters for measurements of acceleration forces, possible canopy deflection and maximum forward speed as per DNV-os-e406 Design Requirements.



**Highest
safety award
Admiraal
de Ruyter.**

Verhoef was founded over 70 years ago and has remained at the forefront of increasing safety at sea ever since. Proudly responsible for the design and development of the world's first freefall lifeboat, Verhoef has set the industry benchmark and had a direct influence on modern safety legislations.

The introduction of the freefall lifeboat is the biggest development of any piece of safety equipment in history. Today, all ships and almost all platforms are equipped with freefall lifeboats as standard. Verhoef remains the only designer and supplier of aluminium lifeboats in the world and over the years has added more world firsts to their impressive history, such as the design and development of the first entirely enclosed lifeboat and the delivery of the first self-righting lifeboat.

As the company was celebrating their 50th anniversary in the early nineties, they were awarded the highly coveted Golden Admiraal de Ruyter medal for

their contribution to safety for all seafarers in the world. This GOLD award is the highest safety award of the Netherlands, and is only very rarely awarded to individuals or companies with a unique development or achievement.

Their award winning track record has continued well into the nineties and beyond with 2011 bringing an Achievement Award, issued by one of the training institutes using the Verhoef freefall lifeboat, which has been dropped more than 5,000 times, with a 100% integrity rate. Once more, this achievement is entirely unique and the only one of its kind and underlines the quality and durability of the Verhoef freefall lifeboats.

Martin Verhoef now leads the Verhoef team and looks back on the company's early years reflecting "Verhoef was founded by my father in 1939. He was an experienced yacht builder and shortly after the Second World War he built the first aluminium lifeboats. From then on the company focused on introducing new products leading to increased safety on boats and platforms."



“The Frame Agreement signed with Statoil underlines exactly the mutual goal of both companies, to achieve maximum safety for all workers on board platforms and ships. We are, of course, honored with this agreement, which shows that Statoil has confidence in our technology, competence and ability to deliver solutions they need.”

— MARTIN VERHOEF,
VICE PRESIDENT, VERHOEF



**FL 75-NS-70P with
high positive head-
way after launch.**



Verhoef proudly reflects that the “development of the first freefall lifeboat in 1959 is no doubt by far, the biggest achievement of our company and we’re immensely proud of this.”

Verhoef remains a family owned business and it’s clear that Verhoef is extremely satisfied by the company’s achievements and many important milestones. He describes “we have a large number of very loyal clients and they choose to work with us over and over again and this is due to the way we look after our clients, the reassurance our deep-rooted history provides and the excellent after sales service we place a great importance on.”

Verhoef goes on to explain that Verhoef’s clients particularly like the fact that “our launching cradles and recovery systems are built as one unit—where others use subcontractors for different parts, with us our clients appreciate only having to deal with one company who takes responsibility for the whole product. This removes issues in testing and commissioning and ultimately saves the end users—whether they’re a ship yard or operator—a lot of problems.”



Factory Tests of FL75 Cradles.



Model test in waves.



Another prominent milestone in Verhoef's celebrated history, is their recent contract win with Norwegian oil giant Statoil. Verhoef was awarded a five year Framework Agreement by Statoil to provide freefall lifeboat systems, as well as, related products and support services.

Verhoef comments, "since our initial contact in February 2012 we have exchanged a lot of information regarding our aluminium freefall lifeboats. Statoil has inspected our FFLB's which were already designed and manufactured in accordance with DNV-OS-E406 and

*Verhoef aluminium totally closed self-erecting life boat
for launching via slipway*

VERHOEF ALUMINIUM SCHEEPSBOUW INDUSTRIE B.V. - AALSMEER - HOLLAND
POSTBOX 260 - TELEFOON (02977) 25451 - TELEX 14280

Advertisement for the first freefall lifeboat – full scale test FFLB 1959.

**BOARDINGTIME WORLD RECORD
70 PERSONS - 2 MIN. 28 SEC.!**





NORSOK R-002” adding, “our freefall lifeboats are considerably different, and manufacturing them from aluminium alloy offers a lot of advantages towards GRP lifeboats.”

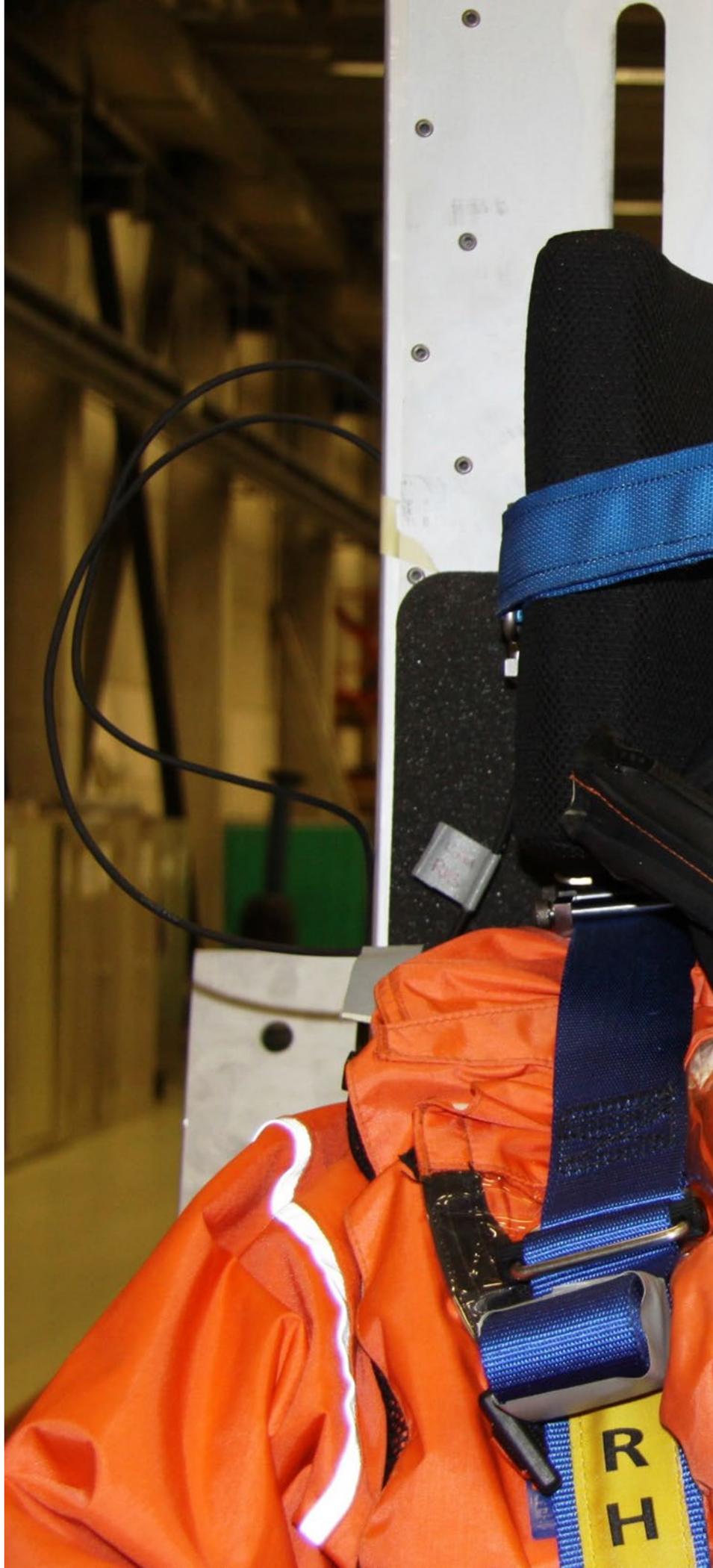
Aluminium is renowned for its high strength-to-weight-ratio characteristic, long duration of life of over 25 years with minimum maintenance required. It also offers the flexibility to manufacture lifeboats as per clients’ specific requirements, in view of capacity but also towards sizes. These features are of great value not only for future projects, but also with regard to upcoming ‘retrofit projects’ where existing platforms of Statoil will be upgraded with new freefall lifeboats, in accordance with the latest standards. Verhoef has already submitted various proposals and where existing platforms do not need to change, introducing they’re launching systems to match with the tailor-made aluminium freefall lifeboats.

Verhoef explains “this offers a significant cost-saving effect for the oil companies” and goes on to say “The Frame Agreement signed with Statoil underlines exactly the mutual goal of both companies, to achieve maximum safety for all workers on board platforms and ships. We are, of course, honored

with this agreement, which shows that Statoil has confidence in our technology, competence and ability to deliver solutions they need.”

Verhoef quite rightly points out that when “People hear the name Statoil they know it’s a company with a front row seat in achieving maximum safety for occupants onboard its ships and platforms. And to be selected for an upcoming project is a tremendous achievement and one in which we’re immensely proud of.” The Statoil contract makes a definite statement to the market that Verhoef is a company capable of delivering state-of-the-art freefall lifeboats.

As well as leading the way in the design and manufacture of lifeboats, Verhoef Access Technology has designed and manufactured more than 700 shore-based access system gangways to oil and gas terminals to over 65 countries. Verhoef emphasizes that “we’ve been in business long enough to know that the oil and gas industry is subject to peaks and troughs and we’ve seen a number of competitors who haven’t survived the troughs. We believe in order to be a reliable partner, we can’t depend on only one product and the ship to shore gangway system has proved to us that we can use our skills and fabrication methods as





there are many similarities in engineering challenges and production methods between lifeboats and gangways.”

So what is Verhoef’s secret to success? Verhoef reveals “as we deliver to so many different countries we’re often faced with the challenge of competing with local suppliers on price and this keeps the organization sharp, flexible and motivated. Doing business in the U.S. is different to doing business in Europe, and again to Australia, for example, so we need to be flexible as an organization and recognize that each and every client has different or unique requirements.”

So what does this company of just 100 people with an annual turnover of 20 million euro see for the future? Verhoef explains “we don’t focus on being the company with the highest profits but on being the best amongst lifeboat

suppliers. Our philosophy involves investing money in research and we’re the only company in the industry with our own research facility. We also invest in things like our full scale test towers so we are very self-supporting and highly motivated to come up with best possible freefall lifeboat in the world.”

It’s clear to see that introducing and improving safety requirements for freefall lifeboats is at the heart of everything Verhoef does. With their commitment to further develop freefall lifeboats, both in design and production, as well as, continuing to introduce new safety requirements for freefall lifeboats. By supporting the authorities and legislation for future standards, it’s no secret that Verhoef plans to continue to lead the way and take their duty to the industry very seriously. ▲



Verhoef is also known for their design and manufacturing of safe and reliable gangway systems.



ALUMINIUM FREEFALL LIFEBOATS



WORLD RECORD BOARDING TIME

70 persons in only 2 minutes and 28 seconds

See us on



or WWW.VERHOEF.EU

(Verhoef Freefall)

T | +31 20 3167100
F | +31 20 6534747
E | INFO@VERHOEF.EU



FL75-70 persons: Statement of Compliance to DNV-OS-E406 since August 2013.

VERHOEF — FIRST IN FREEFALL