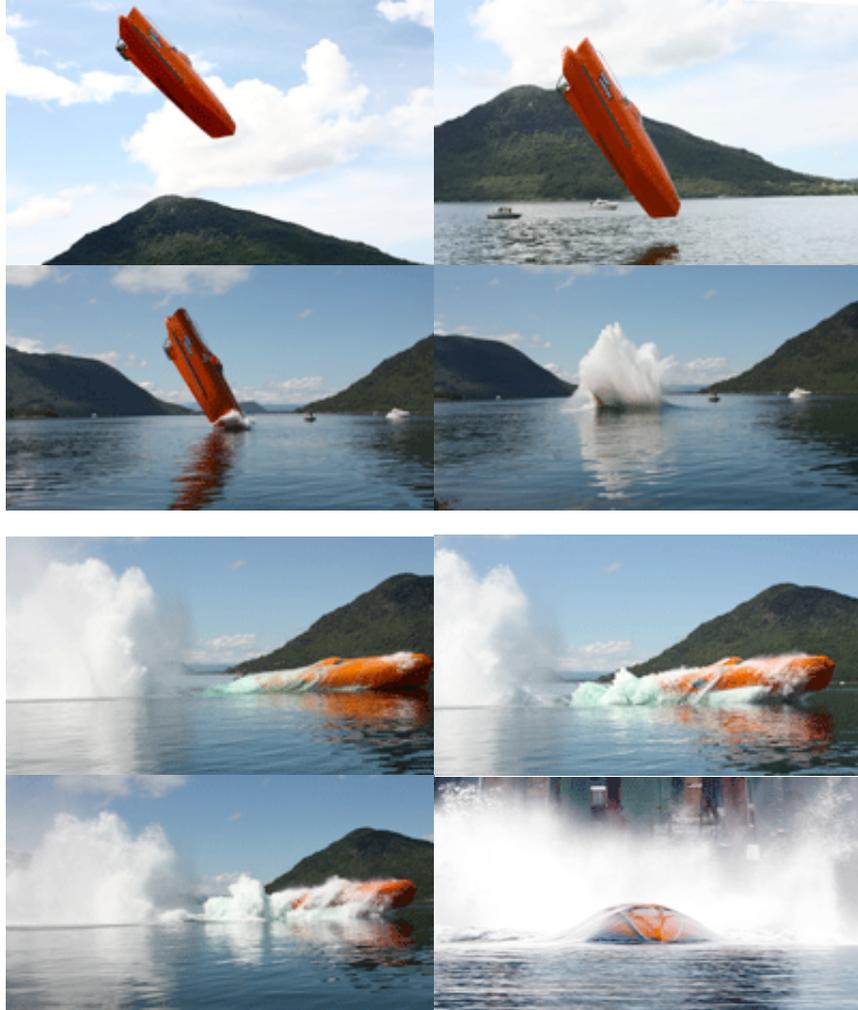




Schat-Harding sets world record freefall drop height



LEADING lifeboat and davit manufacturer Schat-Harding has set a world record for a lifeboat freefall drop by successfully launching its new FF1200 offshore lifeboat from a drop height of 55 metres.

Fully loaded and with an all up weight of 30 tonnes the FF1200 was dropped into the sea from a 55 m test rig at Schat-Harding's Rosendal facility in west Norway this week.. The boat surfaced with powerful positive headway and no internal or external damage.

"The G forces measured in the boat during fall and impact were well below the requirements of the authorities," says Ove Roessland, CEO, Schat-Harding. "The high drop height makes the boat go very deep, around 11 metres under the water, and gives it a lot of momentum to clear the rig. We are very proud of our new boat, which sets a complete new benchmark for safety in the offshore energy field."

Roessland says 55 metres is by no means the highest limit of the boat, but was dictated only by the height of the available crane for testing. "We don't expect to see service heights like this in the near future," says Roessland. "But we want to be sure our boats will be safe at heights over 40 metres, and so we are testing them as high as we can. It is quite something to see a 30 tonne lifeboat flying from 55 metres."

Schat-Harding has already received ten orders for the FF1200 from BP and Talisman Energy. The first craft will be delivered to Talisman's YME development project in third-quarter 2009.

For information on the FF1200 email: john@merlinco.com

For an image of the first FF1200 freefall drop, email: john@merlinco.com or you can download a very hi res image of the boat in flight by clicking on:

<http://picasaweb.google.co.uk/Merlinclients/SchatHarding>

Schat-Harding is the world's leading supplier and authorised service provider for lifeboat and evacuation systems for the offshore, cruise and shipping industries. With factories and offices in Norway, the UK, the Netherlands, Germany, Panama, Singapore, Spain, Canada, the Czech Republic, the USA and China, and agents in thirty other countries, Schat-Harding provides a global service and supply network. Brands now owned by Schat-Harding include Watercraft, Viking Marine, Waterman, Fiskars, Davit-Company, MASECO, Watercraft America, William Mills Marine, Schat, Harding, Mulder & Rijke and the Beiyang Boatbuilding Co. In addition Schat-Harding is now authorised by many of the world's lifeboat manufacturers to provide OEM servicing in accordance with the requirements of MSC1206.

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