

Safe Access

Accommodation Ladders



Legislation regarding the use and deployment of accommodation ladders is included in: Statutory Instrument 1988, No 1637, The Merchant Shipping (Means of Access) Regulations 1988; ILO Safety and Health in Ports and the Code of Safe Working Practices for Merchant Seamen 2006, II-1 / 3-9 of the 1974 SOLAS convention, on which the following guidelines are based.

Accommodation ladders must comply with the specifications set out in Standard BS MA 89:1980 or be of equivalent standard. The ladder should be designed so that:

- It rests firmly against the side of the ship;
- The angle of the slope is no more than 55° unless specifically designed for greater angles;
- Treads and steps should provide a safe foothold at the angle at which the ladder is used;
- It is fitted with suitable fencing (preferably rigid handrails but may be rope or chain) along its entire length, except that fencing at the bottom platform may allow access from the outboard side;
- The bottom platform is, as near as possible, horizontal, and any intermediate platforms are self-levelling.

Guard ropes, chains, etc., should be kept taut at all times and stanchions should be rigidly secured or locked to prevent accidental dislodgement.

When the inboard end of the gangway or accommodation ladder rests on or is flush with the top of the bulwark, a bulwark ladder should be provided. Any gap between

the bulwark ladder and accommodation ladder should be adequately fenced to a height of at least 1 metre.

The means of access and its immediate approaches should be kept free from obstruction and, as far as reasonably practicable, kept clear of any substance likely to cause a person to slip or fall. Where this is not possible, appropriate warning notices should be posted and if necessary the surfaces suitably treated.

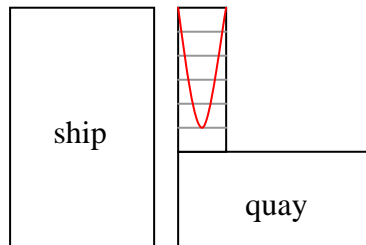
Accommodation ladders should be deployed so as to remain clear of cranes, crane rails and other equipment and obstructions at all times.

Accommodation ladders should be adequately illuminated at all times.

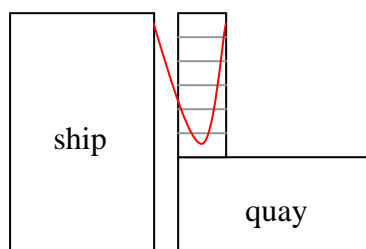
A safety net should be mounted whenever possible where a person may fall from boarding equipment or from the ship's deck or quayside. The aim of safety nets is to minimise the risk of injury arising from falling between the ship and the quay or falling onto the quay or deck and as far as is reasonably practicable the whole length of the means of access should be covered. **Safety nets should be securely rigged, with use being made of attachment points on the quayside where appropriate*.**

*As prescribed in the Code of Safe Working Practices for Merchant Seamen 2006.

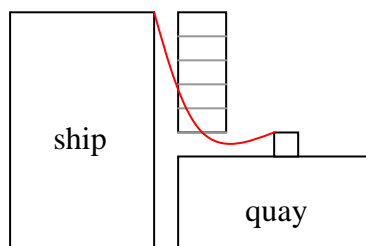
Netting arrangements will vary from ship to ship but the following methods are deemed by the MCA to be acceptable:



a) Net secured from inboard handrail of gangway, passing underneath and secured on outboard handrail.



b) Net secured from side of ship, underneath gangway and secured on outboard handrail.



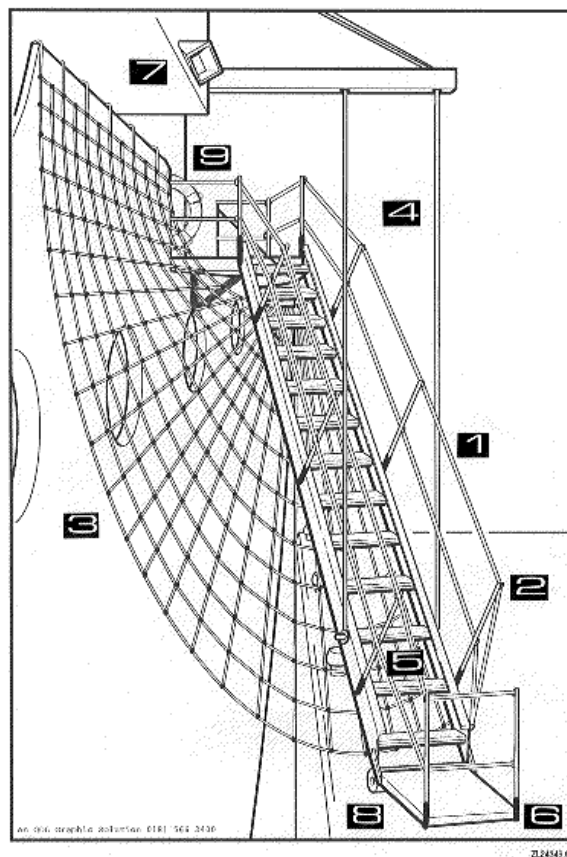
c) Net secured from side of ship, passing under gangway and secured to a suitable quayside attachment point

NB. Where an enclosed sided gangway is provided, a net is not necessary. (Enclosed being either a solid side or solid fixed rails as shown below.)



Important points to be considered during the rigging process:

1. Rope guardrails tight and free of damage and/or degradation
2. Stanchions free of distortion and all in place
3. Safety net positioned between ladder and ship, free of damage and/or degradation
4. Hoisting arrangements clear of head height
5. Steps free of oil, grease and ice
6. Bottom platform level (where fitted)
7. Lighting arrangements positioned effectively
8. Base clear of obstructions
9. Lifebuoy fitted with a light and a lifeline with a quoit available at the point of Access



Gangways



All gangways should be marked with the appropriate stamp showing make and SWL.

The maximum angle should not exceed 60° from the horizontal, and should extend 1m above the final landing place (i.e. 1m in from the quay edge)

Gangways should be adequately illuminated at all times and deployed so as to remain clear of cranes, crane rails and other equipment and obstructions at all times.

As with accommodation ladders these to should be netted, as shown below.



The berthing process of a vessel is not deemed to be complete until the means of access is safe.

Port personnel should not board a vessel until a safe means of access is provided.

In the event of any dispute the will be consulted.

Until the issue is resolved, no Port personnel should board the vessel.

The above is intended to be illustrative and is by no means exhaustive, and it should be remembered that the Master of the vessel is responsible for the safe access to that vessel. However POTLL has a duty of care to its employees to ensure that this is provided.