Figure 39: Dummy in rough sea during the recovery situation

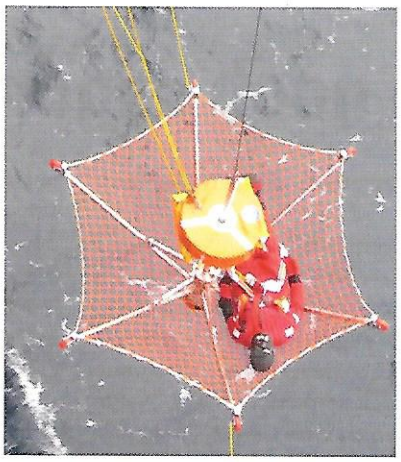

Figure 40: Lifting the RLS – Rescue Star with the dummy in a horizontal position

Figure 41: The dummy taken swiftly on board

a rescue boat was not possible due to bad weather conditions. After the stopping manoeuvre, the RESCUE-STAR was let down by the Suez crane into the water and lowered below the water surface and waves as intended. The dummy was pulled to the orange-coloured rescue disc, and when it was in the correct and safe position above the RESCUE-STAR, which was below the waterline, the bosun hoisted the RESCUE-STAR with the Suez crane on command. The dummy was secured safely close to the centre of the net of the RESCUE-STAR. The rescue operation for taking the dummy on board was performed in less than three minutes after the stopping manoeuvre.

If the person in the water is unable to reach the rescue disc by swimming, alternatively a line connection with a pneumatic line throwing device can be used. This is an acceptable result especially with weather conditions such as wind up to 7 Beaufort and wave heights of four meter for a rolling ship with 20° on each side.

Three criteria for achieving a satisfactory result are:

1. A suitable recovery system has to be available on board. The RLS RESCUE-STAR fulfils the requirements nearly optimally; persons in the water can be taken on board without changing their position in a horizontal and gentle way in accordance with medical aspects (compared with taking over into a rescue boat).
2. The vessel is not supposed to make any speed through the water if the RESCUE-STAR is in the water.
3. The crew has to be familiarised with the equipment and its functions. For the operation of the RESCUE-STAR no more persons are needed than for the operation of the regular rescue boat.

A real rescue operation can be performed even on large cargo ships with a ship side of 17-20 meters height in rough weather conditions, as shown by the demonstration on LT »Cortesia«. According to the IMO, recovery systems will be mandatory on cargo and passenger ships from 2012 at the earliest. It will be a real hope for the rescue of helpless people in the water.

The chain of rescue is as strong as its weakest link. Recovering people from the sea is the weakest link in the chain of rescue. This new technology closes the safety gap.

It's another big step forward for merchant shipping.

- Advantages:
  - No risk for own crew because no rescue boat has to be waterborne.
  - The RESCUE-STAR works independently of wave heights and wave directions.
  - The vessel does not need to take any special rescue position and can move into the most appropriate and safe position. This is important for large container-ships, which have to take special care of their container cargo. It is recommended to drift with the vessel directly to the persons in the water so that the midship section meets the survivors in the water. From the midship position, the persons can be pulled safely to the rescue disc of the RESCUE-STAR.
- Disadvantages:
  A new item of equipment; for installations on existing ships a suitable position on board has to be found offering a position from where the devices can be operated depending on the vessel's type and size. Training and familiarisation with the new equipment has to be carried out at regular intervals.

Captain Peer Lange, See-BG