

Quick release for anchor cable, bitter end

Inspectors are visiting many vessels where the design of the anchor cable bitter end attachment could be considered to be unsafe

The basic quick release for the 'bitter end' of the anchor cable usually consists of a steel box attached to the chain locker, in which an 'L' shaped pin with a flat surface is passed through the final link of the anchor cable. To operate it should only be required to remove the safety pin with two fingers and hit the flat end with the provided sledge hammer, thus releasing the cable in any emergency.

On recent inspections of new ships the safety pin is now drilled with a split pin fitted to the safety pin, so now instead of a 'quick release', it is necessary to have

pliers, screwdriver and small hammer - as well as the sledge hammer. This makes quick release impossible and a great deal less safe for the personnel involved.

It is therefore recommended that any split pin fitted to the safety pin of all such bitter end arrangements should be removed and that the safety pin is kept in a free and well greased condition at all times. A specially marked (red painted) sledge hammer should always also be installed in an accessible position to allow the release of the cable in any emergency. The bitter ends should at all times remain unobstructed.



Obstructed bitter end



Good bitter end