



# Lift Owner News

## **Subject: In-service thorough examination of lifting equipment**

The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER) require that “the employer”, for work equipment, must ensure that lifting equipment used for lifting persons is thoroughly examined by a competent person every 6 months (or according to a written schedule of examination by the competent person). Thorough examination is also required after modification or alteration, change in the condition of use, accidents, prolonged inactivity, or other occurrence leading to them being unsafe.

In the case of lifting equipment installed in buildings, “the employer” in the Regulations would usually be the building owner or the person responsible for the building. These duties are related to work equipment which is defined as “any machinery, appliance, apparatus, tool or installation for use at work (whether exclusively or not).” Lifting equipment not subject to these regulations might fall under others such as the Health and Safety at Work Act. In any case, we strongly recommend that all lifts are maintained and thoroughly examined in a similar way to ensure the safety of both users and workers.

Maintenance is required to ensure the continued safety of lifts and lifting equipment. This is typically carried out by lift companies. Maintenance includes activities such as: lubrication and cleaning, functional checks, check of passenger rescue functionality, the operations of setting and adjustment, and repair or changing of components that are included in the maintenance agreement which degrade through wear and tear. Maintenance does not include thorough examination; these are distinct activities and should not be confused.

Thorough examination is intended to check if it is safe for lifting equipment to remain in service and so is partly a check that effective maintenance is being carried out. The thorough examination should be undertaken by a competent person. It is essential that the competent person is sufficiently independent and impartial to allow objective decisions to be made. For this reason, the competent person should be independent of the maintenance organization (so it should not be the same person who performs the routine maintenance), so that they are not responsible for assessing their own work.

Thorough examination is a detailed examination of the lifting equipment; the competent person determines the details of the examination to be undertaken depending and might include supplementary testing if required. This testing can be done by the maintenance organization who should then pass their report to the competent person to assess.

The competent person draws up the report of the thorough examination which should be given to the owner. This details any work needed to be done with timescales for this repair work. The owner should ensure that the repairs are made within the timescales, otherwise take the lifting equipment out of service (this could be immediately). The owner also has a responsibility to retain the report of thorough examination and make it available to others working on the lifting equipment.