CLAIMS

1. A lift (10) for sideways loading of equipment modules (52), or cargo containers, onto a mounting surface of a sea vessel, said equipment modules (52) having sizes substantial equal to, or exceeding the dimensions of standard shipping containers, including 20- or 40-foot containers, said lift comprising:

- a frame for supporting said equipment modules (52) or cargo containers, said frame comprises:
- a number of conveying beams (20) for conveying said equipment module (52) or cargo container in a sideways direction in relation to said frame, and
- means (18) for lifting said conveying beams in a vertical direction,

wherein said conveying beams (20) comprises a first beam element (22) connected to said base frame (16), and a second beam element (24) arranged substantially horizontally displaceable in relation to said base frame (16).

2. A lift (10) according to claim 1, wherein said frame comprises a horizontally expandable and/or displaceable base frame (16), said number of conveying beams (20) being connected to said base frame (16) such that said lift accommodates modules or containers of different sizes and/or performing a displacement of said conveying beams (16) in a direction substantial parallel to said conveying beams (16).

3. A lift (10) according to claim 1 or 2, wherein said conveying beams (20) comprises a third beam element (26) arranged between said first and second beam element (22, 24) and arranged substantially horizontally displaceable in relation to said base frame (16).

4. A lift (10) according to claim 3, wherein said third beam element (26), at an outer end thereof, comprises a connection element (30) for interconnection with a part of said sea vessel, the part of said sea vessel including an opening 32.

5. A method for sideways loading of equipment modules (52) or cargo containers onto a mounting surface of a sea vessel, said equipment modules (52) having sizes substantial equal to, or exceeding the dimensions of standard shipping containers, including 20- or 40-foot container, said method comprising the following steps:

- providing a lift (10) according to any one of claims 1-4,

- arranging an equipment module (52) or cargo container onto said lift (10),
- maneuvering said lift (10) on a ground surface into a position substantial parallel with the hull (12) of said sea vessel at a specific location,
- raising said equipment module (52) or cargo container by said lift (10) in a vertical direction to a specific vertical position in relation to a mission bay (14) in said hull (12),
- conveying said equipment module (52) or cargo container sideways into said mission bay (14), by said conveying beams (20),
- connecting said equipment module (52) or cargo container to an anchoring point within said mission bay (14),
- retracting said conveying beams (20) out of said mission bay (14),

wherein said step of conveying said equipment module (52) or cargo container sideways into said mission bay (14), by said conveying beams (20), comprises the step of displacing said conveying beams (20) in a longitudinal direction thereof sideways towards said hull (12), and into engagement with said vessel, such that said conveying beams interconnect therewith.

6. The method according to claim 5, wherein the step of arranging the equipment module or cargo container onto said lift, comprises the step of expanding said frame in a horizontal direction according to a horizontal dimension of said equipment module or cargo container and lowering said equipment module or cargo container onto said conveying beams.

7. The method according to claim 5 or 6, wherein said lift (10) comprises a number of wheels (44) and said step of maneuvering said lift (10), comprising the step of adjusting said wheels (44) around an axis being substantially perpendicular to said ground surface.

8. The method according to any one of claims 5-7, wherein said step of maneuvering said lift (10) comprises the step of adjusting said position in relation to a reference marker (42), preferably a vertical reference marker arranged on said hull (12), by use of a sensor (40), and/or by sensing the distance between the lift and the hull by a distance sensor.

9. The method according to any one of claims 5-7, wherein said step of raising said equipment module (52) or cargo container by said lift (10) in the vertical direction, to the specific vertical position in relation to the mission bay (14) in said hull, comprises the step of controlling said raising of said equipment module (52) or cargo container in relation to a reference marker (42), preferably a horizontal reference marker arranged on said hull, by a control unit and a sensor (40).

10. The method according to any one of claims 5-9, wherein said step of conveying said equipment module (52) or cargo container sideways into said mission bay (14), by said conveying beams (20), further comprising:

- said conveying beams (20) having a drive mechanism for performing said displacement, said drive mechanism, when said conveying beams are interconnected with said vessel, having a passive state, such that said displacement of said conveying beams (20) is a result of any sideways movement of said sea vessel, and /or
- said conveying beams (20), at said ends closest to said hull (12), being vertically displaceable in relation to said base frame (16), such that said ends move in a vertical direction as a result of any tilting rotation of said sea vessel, and/or
- said conveying beams (20) being displaceable in a direction perpendicular to a longitudinal direction of said conveying beams (20) by displacing said base frame (16) in a horizontal direction preferably by a control unit and said sensor, as a result of any longitudinal movement of said vessel.

11. The method according to any one of claims 5-10, wherein said step of connecting said equipment module (52) or cargo container to the anchoring point within said mission bay (14) further comprises the step of locking said equipment module (52) or cargo container to a connecting element (34) and lifting said equipment module or cargo container by a lifting element (34), in a vertical direction in relation to said conveying beams (20).

12. The method according to claim 11, wherein said connecting element (34) and said lifting element (34) are integrated.

13. The method according to any one of claims 5-12, wherein the step of retracting said conveying beams (20) out of said mission bay (14) comprises the step of raising

said conveying beams (20) a predetermined vertical distance before being retracted sideways out of said mission bay (14).