CLAIMS

1. Rope handling system for handling of synthetic rope, comprising:
   - a synthetic rope comprising at least a first rope section and second rope section interconnected by a first connector; and
   - a rope storage device comprising:
     - a first rope reel, having a horizontal spooling axle, onto which at least the length of the first rope section is spooled, and
     - a level winding mechanism extending across the horizontal spooling axle of the first rope reel to spool in and/ or spool out rope,

   characterized in that the rope storage device further comprises
     - a second rope reel, adjacent and spaced from the first rope reel, onto which at least the length of the second rope section is spooled,
     - a connector storage space provided between the first and second rope reels, into which the first connector is housed.

2. Rope handing system according to claim 1, wherein the synthetic rope further comprises a third rope section interconnected to the second rope section by a second rope connector.

3. Rope handing system according to the preceding claim, wherein the third rope section is spooled onto the first rope section onto the first rope reel, and wherein the second rope connector is housed in the connector storage space.

4. Rope handing system according to claim 1, wherein the first and second rope reel have a common spooling axle.

5. Rope handing system according to the preceding claim, wherein the level winding mechanism extends across the common spooling axle of the first and second rope reel.

6. Rope handing system according to claim 1, wherein a rope reel comprises a drum between two flanges, and wherein the flange of the first rope reel adjacent the connector storage is provided with a slit for the passage of the first rope section, and wherein the flange of the second rope reel adjacent the connector storage is provided with a slit for the passage of the second rope section.

7. Rope handing system according to claim 1, further comprising a hoist device to deploy the synthetic rope.

8. Rope handing system according claim 7, further comprising a hang-off device adapted to engage the connector and suspend at least a rope section of the synthetic rope therefrom.

9. Rope handling system for handling of synthetic rope, comprising:

- a synthetic rope comprising at least a first rope section and second rope section interconnected by a first connector; and
- a rope storage device;
- a transfer assembly to transfer the synthetic rope;

characterized in that the transfer assembly comprises a connector guide trough, supporting the connector as it slides through the trough.

10. Rope handing system according to claim 9, wherein the trough is provided with a low friction material along the trough to protect the synthetic rope and the connector.

11. Rope handing system according to claim 9, wherein the rope storage device comprises:

- a first rope reel, having a horizontal spooling axle, onto which at least the length of the first rope section is spoolable, and
- a level winding mechanism extending across the horizontal spooling axle of the first rope reel to spool in and/ or spool out rope.

12. Rope handing system according to claim 11, wherein an end of the guide trough is provided above the level winding mechanism and wherein a swivelling guide is provided at this end to receive the synthetic rope from the level winding mechanism.

13. Rope handing system according claim 9, further comprising a hang-off device adapted to engage the connector and suspend at least a rope section of the synthetic rope therefrom.

14. Rope handing system according to the preceding claim, wherein an end of the guide trough is provided near the hang-off device and wherein a movable, e.g. extendable guide is provided at this end of the trough to either allow the connector to engage the hang-off device, or allow the synthetic rope to bypass the hang-off device.

15. Rope handing system according to claim 9, further comprising a hoist device to deploy the synthetic rope.

16. Rope handling system for handling of synthetic rope, comprising:

- a synthetic rope comprising at least a first rope section and second rope section interconnected by a first connector; and
- a rope storage device;
- a transfer assembly to transfer the synthetic rope;
- a hang-off device, adapted to engage the connector and suspend at least a rope section of the synthetic rope therefrom,

characterized in that

the transfer assembly comprises a movable, e.g. extendable guide provided near the hang-off device to either allow the connector to engage the hang-off device, or allow the synthetic rope to bypass the hang-off device.

17. Rope handing system according to claim 16, wherein the guide is extendable by a hydraulic cylinder, e.g. provided on deck of a vessel.

18. Vessel provided with a rope handling system according to any of the preceding claims.

19. Method of handling synthetic rope wherein use is made of a rope handling system according to one or more of the preceding claims.

20. Method of handling synthetic rope comprising at least a first rope section and a second rope section interconnected by a first connector; comprising the steps of :

- positioning a movable guide provided near a hang-off device in a position allowing the synthetic rope to bypass the hang-off device;
- connecting the second rope section to a hoist cable of a hoist device;
- unspooling the second rope section from a second rope reel and lowering the second rope section by the hoist device, thereby bypassing the hang-off device;
- unspooling the first connector from a connector storage space;
- moving the movable guide in a position allowing the connector to engage the hang-off device;
- engaging the first connector by the hang-off device and suspending the second rope section from the hang-off device,
- raising the hoist cable;

- connecting the first connector to the hoist cable and disengaging the first connector from the hang-off device;
- positioning the movable guide in the position allowing the synthetic rope to bypass the hang-off device;
- unspooling the first rope section from a first rope reel and lowering the first rope section by the hoist device.