

# RECOVERY OF PERSONS FROM THE WATER

GUIDELINES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF PLANS AND PROCEDURES



**INTERNATIONAL CHAMBER OF SHIPPING (ICS)**

*Representing the Global Shipping Industry*



# RECOVERY OF PERSONS FROM THE WATER

From July 2014<sup>1</sup>, all ships are required by new IMO regulations (SOLAS Regulation III/17-1) to have ship-specific plans and procedures for the recovery of persons from the water. The plans and procedures must identify the equipment intended to be used for recovery purposes and measures to be taken to minimise the risk to shipboard personnel involved in recovery operations. (Ro-ro passenger ships which comply with SOLAS Regulation III/26.4 are deemed by IMO to comply with this new regulation.)

**In the majority of cases, the carriage of additional dedicated equipment will probably be unnecessary.**

These ICS Guidelines have been developed to assist companies when preparing to comply with the new SOLAS Regulation III/17-1 and should be used together with the IMO *Guidelines for the Development of Plans and Procedures for the Recovery of Persons from the Water* (MSC.1/Circ.1447), *the Guide to Recovery Techniques* (MSC.1/Circ.1182) and the *Guide for Cold Water Survival* (MSC.1/Circ.1185/Rev.1).

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<sup>1</sup> Ships constructed before 1 July 2014 must comply with this requirement by the next periodical or next renewal survey (whichever comes first) after 1 July 2014.



# DEVELOPMENT OF PLANS AND PROCEDURES FOR THE RECOVERY OF PERSONS FROM THE SEA

## 1 IDENTIFY EACH SHIP'S LIFE SAVING APPLIANCES OR OTHER EQUIPMENT

To assist in the development of plans and procedures, existing on board equipment should be identified which may be used to recover persons from the water. Although other equipment may also be identified as being useful for recovering persons from the water, the following are examples that might be considered (if fitted or carried):

- Lifeboats;
- Liferrafts;
- Rescue boats;
- Shell openings (such as pilot or bunker doors);
- Pilot ladders;
- Accommodation ladders;
- Cranes/derricks;
- Lifebuoys;
- Marine Evacuation Systems;
- First aid equipment;
- Lifebuoys;
- Searchlights; and
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

## 2 CONDUCT SUITABILITY AND RISK ASSESSMENTS FOR THE IDENTIFIED EQUIPMENT

The suitability of each identified equipment should be evaluated, bearing in mind the anticipated operating conditions and ship-specific characteristics, including:

- Manoeuvrability of the ship;
- Freeboard;
- Recovery issues;
- Available manpower;
- Limitations and characteristics of ship's equipment;
- Available PPE;
- Wind force, direction and effect of spray;
- Significant wave height;
- Period of waves;
- Swell conditions; and
- Safety of navigation.

Following a determination of suitability, a risk assessment should be conducted for the use of the identified equipment suitable for recovery of persons from the water.

When evaluating the risks associated with identified equipment, it may be useful to establish a 'risk level' or 'risk factor' by categorising the likelihood of harm occurring and the potential severity of harm (see example below).

Likelihood of Harm Occurring	Potential severity of harm		
	Slight Harm	Moderate Harm	Extreme Harm
Very Unlikely	VERY LOW RISK	VERY LOW RISK	HIGH RISK
Unlikely	VERY LOW RISK	MEDIUM RISK	VERY HIGH RISK
Likely	LOW RISK	HIGH RISK	VERY HIGH RISK
Very Likely	LOW RISK	VERY HIGH RISK	VERY HIGH RISK



## 3 DETERMINE IF ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT OR SPECIALISED EQUIPMENT WILL BE REQUIRED

The results of the risk assessment for the identified equipment will allow a judgement to be made on whether additional or specified equipment will be required. **In the majority of cases, the carriage of additional dedicated equipment will probably be unnecessary.**

## 4 DEVELOP PLANS AND PROCEDURES AND CONSIDER MITIGATING MEASURES

The plans and procedures should be developed for the equipment identified by the review and assessment stages. Any mitigating measures should be considered and the plans and procedures should address:

- Hazards/risks related to the specific operation;
- Allocation of duties and responsibilities on board;
- Actions to be taken in case the situation changes;
- Communication methods;
- Procedures for requesting assistance from third parties;
- Procedures for notifying the Company and reporting to authorities;
- Liaison with shore authorities and the Company, as appropriate;
- Minimising the risk of injury from impact with the ship's side, other appliances or recovery equipment;
- A source of illumination and, if required, power should be available for the recovery area;
- Specific operational parameters where recovery operations can be completed safely should be set; and
- If carried, dedicated recovery equipment should be clearly marked with the maximum number of persons it can accommodate, based on a weight of 82.5kg per person.



## TRAINING AND DRILLS

The Company should ensure that crew are familiar with the developed plans and the specified equipment, and documentary evidence should be maintained.

Drills should ensure that the crew are familiar with the plans and procedures.

## INTEGRATION WITH THE SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The plans and procedures should be considered as part of the emergency preparedness plan required by Paragraph 8 of Part A of the International Safety Management (ISM) Code.

# EXAMPLE PLAN AND PROCEDURE

There are many scenarios which might require the vessel to attempt recovery of a person from the water, ranging from assisting a vessel in distress to responding to a person overboard incident.

## On board procedures

Describe initial response to an incident:

- Bridge response;
- Vessel alarm/muster procedures; and
- Ensuring vessel is ready for manoeuvring.

**The initiation or continuation of the ship's recovery operations should be at the discretion of the Master of the recovering ship**

## Equipment

List of specified equipment for recovery operations identified by the Company.

This should include the ship's equipment identified and assessed for recovery operations, examples might include:

- Rescue boat;
- Lifeboat and liferaft;
- First aid party equipment; and
- Lifebuoy and line.

## Roles and responsibilities for those involved in a recovery operation

This should include details on Bridge Team arrangement, person in charge on deck, designated boat crew, designated communications personnel and first aid party.

## Communications requirements

This should include procedures to contact shore authorities and the Designated Person Ashore (DPA), as required by the ISM Code.

## Safety parameters

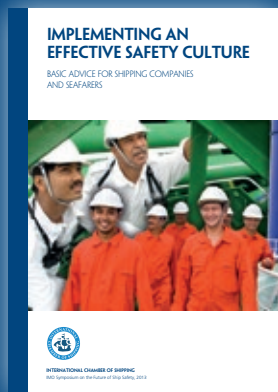
The safety parameters and any mitigating measures identified or established during the development of plans should be clearly stated, such as:

- Safety of own crew;
- Wind force;
- Swell;
- Visibility;
- Risk to own vessel; and
- Any other factors.

## Post recovery

Advice should be considered and included for the management of events after any recovery of persons from the water. This could include initial first aid, ongoing care considerations, and recommendations for consequent arrangements with shore or other rescue vessels for medical evacuation.

Also available for free download via ICS website:



## **Implementing an Effective Safety Culture: Basic Advice for Shipping Companies and Seafarers**

This brochure provides basic advice to companies on the successful implementation of an effective 'safety culture' as well as guidance on risk assessment and risk management.

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