



SHIP SAFETY DIVISION International Safety Management (ISM)

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To: All recognized classification societies acting on behalf of See-BG, shipowners, shipoperators, designated persons and masters of German ships

Sub.: Resolution MSC.216(82) / Annex 1 - Adoption of amendments to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS)

Inspection and maintenance of immersion suits

1. This circular informs about significant amendments to SOLAS, which coming into force on **1st July 2008** and will affect Chapter III "Live-Saving Appliances and Arrangements". Further, we like to draw your attention to the requirements and recommendations regarding inspection and maintenance of immersion suits.

2. Following IMO resolution MSC.216 (82) and the application of MSC.1/Circ.1243 for a unified interpretation of the provisions of SOLAS Chapter III concerning arrangements for remotely located survival craft and in relation with the amended SOLAS regulation III/32.3.3, the German Flag State Administration determines with the beginning on **1st July 2008** for ships, which are flying the German Flag, that

Life rafts, if located at the aft / forward end of the ship and at a distance of more than 100 Meters from the closest survival craft, as required by SOLAS regulation III/31.1.4, should be regarded as "remotely located survival craft" with regard to SOLAS regulation III/7.2.1.2.

The area where these "remotely located survival crafts" are stowed should be provided with:

- *a minimum number of 2 lifejackets and 2 immersion suits (of an appropriate size);*
- *adequate means of illumination complying with SOLAS regulation III/16.7, either fixed or portable, which should be capable of illuminating the life raft stowage position as well as the area of water into which the life raft should be launched. Portable lights, when used, should have brackets to permit their positioning on both sides of the ship; and*
- *an embarkation ladder or other means of embarkation¹ enabling descent to the water in a controlled manner in accordance with SOLAS regulation III/11.7.*

¹ Remark: Jacob's ladders are accepted by the See-Berufsgenossenschaft as other means of embarkation, while the use of knotted ropes is not permitted.

The contrary interpretation of the See-Berufsgenossenschaft, published on 23rd May 2005 is herewith revoked.

3. Paragraph 3.3.4 of regulation III/19 (Emergency training and drills) is replaced by the following:

*“In the case of a lifeboat arranged for free-fall launching, at least once every three months during an abandon ship drill the crew shall board the lifeboat, properly secure themselves in their seats and commence launch procedures up to but not including the actual release of the lifeboat (i.e., the release hook shall not be released). The lifeboat shall then either be free-fall launched with only the required operating crew on board, or lowered into the water by means of the secondary means of launching **with or without** the operating crew on board. **In both cases** the lifeboat shall thereafter be manoeuvred in the water by the operating crew. At intervals of not more than six months, the lifeboat shall either be launched by free-fall with only the operating crew on board, or simulated launching shall be carried out in accordance with the guidelines developed by the Organization.”*

This supersedes ISM-Circular 05-2006 (Early implementation of draft SOLAS Regulation III/19.3.3.4).

4. Paragraphs 4.1 and 4.2 of regulation III/20.4 (Maintenance of falls) are replaced by the following:

“Falls used in launching shall be inspected periodically with special regard for areas passing through sheaves, and renewed when necessary due to deterioration of the falls or at intervals of not more than 5 years, whichever is the earlier.”

5. The following new paragraph 11.3 is added to the Regulation III/20.11 (Periodic servicing of launching appliances and on-load release gear):

“Davit-launched life raft automatic release hooks shall be:

- maintained in accordance with instructions for on-board maintenance as required by regulation 36*
- subject to a thorough examination and operational test during the annual surveys required by regulations I/7 and I/8 by properly trained personnel familiar with the system; and*
- operationally tested under a load of 1.1 times the total mass of the life raft when loaded with its full complement of persons and equipment whenever the automatic release hook is overhauled. Such over-hauling and test shall be carried out at least once every five years.”*

In addition the chapeau of paragraph 11.2 of regulation III/20.11 is replaced by the following:

“Lifeboat or rescue boat on-load release gear, including free-fall lifeboat release systems, shall be....”

6. Inspection and maintenance of immersion suits shall be carried out monthly as required by regulation III/20.7. The guidelines as set out in the annex of MSC/Circ.1047 should be taken into account in relation to monthly shipboard inspection of immersion suits. To ensure an adequate strength and watertightness of seams and closures of immersion suits, it is recommended to consider relevant instructions of the manufacturer and the guidelines of MSC/Circ.1114 (Guidelines for periodic testing of immersion suit and anti-exposure suit seams and closures). The maintenance and inspection of immersion suits shall be properly recorded.

7. All parties concerned are requested to take note of this circular. Copies shall be carried on board of ships flying the German Flag.

For further questions please contact Capt. Peer Lange at Tel. 040-361 319 or by e-mail (peer.lange@see-bg.de).

Copies of MSC.216 (82), MSC.1/Circ.1243, MSC/Circ.1047 and MSC/Circ.1114 are available on our website at:

<http://www.see-bg.de/schiffssicherheit/isme/ - msc>

Ship-Safety-Division