



**MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND WORKS
DEPARTMENT OF MERCHANT SHIPPING
LEMESOS**

09 February 2007

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To all Owners, Managers
and Representatives
of ships under the Cyprus Flag.

To all recognised Classification Societies
and Inspectors of Cyprus Ships

Subject: Measures to Prevent Accidents with Lifeboats

The Maritime Safety Committee of the International Maritime Organization at its 81st session in May 2006, held a discussion on measures to prevent accidents with lifeboats and issued circulars 1206 – “Measures to Prevent Accidents with Lifeboats” and 1207 – “Early Implementation of Draft SOLAS Regulation III/19.3.3.4.”.

Furthermore, issues related to MSC.1 / Circ. 1206 were discussed during the MSC 82nd session, held between November 29 and December 8, 2006. As a result of those discussions, the Committee recognizing the practical difficulties in the implementation of MSC.1 / Circ. 1206, mainly those problems identified in relation to the training and certification of persons / companies by the manufacturers, and the adequate geographical coverage of such manufacturers representation, agreed to keep the said Circular as non-mandatory at this stage, until all difficulties have been overcome.

Following the above discussions, the Department of Merchant Shipping wishes to clarify the policy adopted by the Government of the Republic of Cyprus in response to these two important IMO circulars.

**MEASURES TO PREVENT ACCIDENTS WITH LIFEBOATS
MSC.1/Circ. 1206 (Attachment 1)**

The MSC.1 / Circ. 1206 is hereby brought to your attention as Guidelines for periodic servicing and maintenance of lifeboats, launching appliances and on-load release gear; Guidance on safety during abandon-ship drills using lifeboats; and Guidelines for simulated launching of free-fall lifeboats.

Paragraph 12 of Annex I of the MSC.1 / Circ. 1206 requires all inspections (apart from the weekly and monthly inspections) to be conducted by the manufacturer's representative or a person appropriately trained and certified by the manufacturer for the work to be done.

Recognizing the practical difficulties in the implementation of Paragraph 12, Annex I of the MSC.1/Circ. 1206, our interpretation of this matter is that the thorough examination (as required by the amended regulation 20.11/Chapter III of SOLAS 74), servicing and repairs of lifeboat launching appliances and on-load release mechanisms may be carried out in accordance with the "Specific Procedures for Maintenance and Servicing" contained in the Appendix of MSC.1/Circ. 1206, either by:

- (1) The manufacturer's representative or a person appropriately trained and certified by the manufacturer for the work to be done.
- (2) A senior ship's officer provided that the officer has received appropriate training by the manufacturer of the launching device and the on-load release mechanism. Documentary evidence confirming the receipt of such training must be presented and satisfy the attending surveyor.
- (3) A service provider, authorised under the provisions of paragraph 9 of Annex 1 of MSC.1 / Circ.1206, by one of the following competent Authorities:
 1. Member States of the European Union
 2. United States of America
 3. Canada
 4. Japan
 5. Australia
 6. China
 7. Norway
 8. Russia

Furthermore, if none of the above options can be applied, the thorough examination (as required by the amended regulation 20.11/Chapter III of SOLAS 74), servicing and repair of lifeboat launching appliances and on-load release mechanisms may be carried out in accordance with the "Specific Procedures for Maintenance and Servicing" contained in the Appendix of MSC.1/Circ. 1206, either by:

- (i) A service provider approved (for the work to be done) by the vessel's Classification Society and/or a Classification Society recognized by the Republic of Cyprus, or
- (ii) An experienced service provider which is not approved by a Classification Society recognized by the Republic of Cyprus but is recommended by the vessel's Classification Society. For this option only, the examination must be carried out under the attendance and to the satisfaction of the attending Surveyor.

The Department of Merchant Shipping must be informed in writing on case by case basis and our consent must be obtained before any one of the above two options (i) or (ii) is applied.

**EARLY IMPLEMENTATION OF DRAFT SOLAS REGULATION III/19.3.3.4
MSC.1/Circular 1207 (Attachment 2)**

The Maritime Safety Committee at its 81st session held in May 2006, approved for subsequent adoption a proposed draft amendment to SOLAS regulation III/19.3.3.4 concerning provisions for the launch of free-fall lifeboats during abandon-ship drills. This amendment aims to prevent accidents with lifeboats occurring during abandon-ship drills.

During the abandon-ship drill, this amendment allows the lifeboat to be launched either by free-fall with only the required operating crew on board, or lowered into the water by secondary means of launching without the operating crew on board, and then manoeuvred in the water by the operating crew.

In the meantime, the Maritime Safety Committee issued the MSC.1/Circ. 1207 which advises the Contracting Governments to implement the said amendment prior to its scheduled date of entry into force.

Taking into consideration the intention of MSC.1/Circ.1207 in relation to the safe conduct of drills involving launching of free-fall lifeboats, The Government of the Republic of Cyprus consents to the immediate application of the said amendment.

This circular supersedes my Circular No. 31/2005 issued on 18 October 2005.

This Circular must be placed on board ships flying the Cyprus Flag.

S. S. Serghiou

Director

Department of Merchant Shipping

cc: Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Communications and Works
Maritime Offices of the Department of Merchant Shipping abroad
Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Diplomatic and Consular Missions of the Republic
Honorary Consular Officers of the Republic
Cyprus Shipping Council
Cyprus Union of Shipowners
PEO Trade Union
SEK Trade Union
Cyprus Bar Association

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