



**REPUBLIC OF
THE MARSHALL ISLANDS**

**OFFICE OF THE
MARITIME ADMINISTRATOR**

Marine Notice

No. 2-011-5

Rev. 8/06

**TO: ALL SHIPOWNERS, OPERATORS, MASTERS AND OFFICERS OF
MERCHANT SHIPS, AND RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATIONS**

SUBJECT: Lifesaving Equipment.

Reference:

- (a) SOLAS Consolidated Edition 2004, Chapter III
- (b) International Life-Saving Appliance (LSA) Code, Resolution MSC.48(66)
- (c) Revised Recommendation on Testing of Life-Saving Appliances, Resolution MSC.81(70)
- (d) European Union Council Directive 96/98/EC on Marine Equipment (MED)
- (e) Recommendations on Conditions for the Approval of Servicing Stations for Inflatable Life Rafts, Resolution A.761(18)
- (f) Adoption of Amendments to the Recommendation on Conditions for the Approval of Servicing Stations for Inflatable Life Rafts (Resolution A.761(18)), Resolution MSC.55(66)
- (g) Measures to Prevent Accidents with Lifeboats (MSC Circular 1206)
- (h) Guidelines for Periodic Testing of Immersion Suit and Anti-exposure Suit Seams and Closures (MSC Circular.1114)
- (i) Marshall Islands Technical Circular #1
- (j) Marshall Islands Technical Circular #4
- (k) Marine Notice 2-011-14, Maintenance and Inspection of Fire-Protection Systems and Appliances

PURPOSE:

This Notice addresses a number of recent issues and requests involving Lifesaving Appliances aboard Marshall Islands Flag vessels that have been presented to the Administration for interpretation and clarification of its policy. This Notice supersedes Rev. 1/06. It supplements the requirements and provisions of reference (a) and must be considered within that context.

APPLICABILITY:

This Notice applies to all ships, MODUs and mobile offshore units (MOUs) subject to reference (a).

REQUIREMENTS:

1.0 Approval of Equipment

- 1.1 All newly installed lifesaving equipment must comply with references (a) through (c). The Administration will accept equipment approvals granted by another State that is a Party to the SOLAS Convention, or a Marshall Islands Recognized Organization (RO) on behalf of the Marshall Islands or other Party to the SOLAS Convention; provided, the approvals are fully in accordance with Convention requirements. The Administration will also accept equipment that has been approved under reference (d), the EU Marine Equipment Directive (MED).
- 1.2 Existing equipment, which was manufactured and tested in accordance with previous SOLAS Convention requirements, may continue to be used as long as it remains in serviceable condition.

2.0 Approval of Service Providers

- 2.1 The Administration recognizes servicing facilities that are approved by a State which is Party to the SOLAS Convention or by a Marshall Islands RO on behalf of a Party to the SOLAS Convention; provided the approvals are in compliance with reference (e), as amended by reference (f). This has become necessary because certain suppliers have not developed networks of service stations to support their products, something that owners should be taking into consideration in the selection of such closely regulated items such as these.
- 2.2 The Administration does not, however, maintain a list of every possible service station so recognized by so many authorities all over the world. Nor is the Administration being advised by anyone as to who they are. That's one of the reasons why the Administration relies upon the local knowledge of the extensive network of class society offices. The Classification Society station offices should know of the availability of such service stations in their area that would be considered suitable for this servicing. Whomever they recommend will be acceptable to the Administration.
- 2.3 If manufacturer certified facilities are not available for servicing and maintenance of lifeboats, launching appliances and on-load release gear, the RO, when satisfied with an organization's ability to carry out these functions, may authorize such organization and its personnel to perform the functions of the manufacturer in accordance with reference (f). Marshall Islands Technical Circular #1, reference (i), provides more specific guidance to ROs in carrying out this function.

3.0 Equipment Servicing

- 3.1 The SOLAS Convention requires that inflatable life rafts, inflatable life jackets, marine evacuation systems, and inflated rescue boats be serviced at approved servicing facilities. Requests to extend servicing interval in accordance with reference (a) are only considered when exceptional circumstances exist. Requests should be fully justified by

substantiation of circumstances and plans to service at first opportunity.

- 3.2 On vessels that have implemented the Harmonized System of Survey and Certification (HSSC) inspection scheme, the inflatable life rafts, any inflatable life jackets, and any installed evacuation systems must be examined and certification verified during the annual, periodical, and renewal surveys stipulated in the 1988 SOLAS Protocol. On other vessels, this equipment is to be serviced just prior to, or during, the Cargo Ship Safety Equipment Certificate periodical and renewal surveys.
- 3.3 The servicing interval and procedures for inflated rescue boats must be in accordance with the manufacturer's requirements. The facility performing the servicing must comply with the requirements of Paragraph 2.1 above.
- 3.4 The Classification Society surveyors must be satisfied that the servicing has been completed satisfactorily prior to endorsing or issuing the Cargo Ship Safety Equipment Certificate or HSSC Cargo Ship Safety Certificate. Attendance of the surveyor during the servicing of the life raft is not mandatory.
- 3.5 The Administration recognizes that annual servicing of the large numbers of life rafts required for passenger ships under their unique voyage conditions may impose unnecessary difficulties. The Administration therefore approves the servicing of life rafts in smaller more manageable groups throughout the certification year. Each life raft, however, must be serviced in a sequence that ensures that no life raft will exceed a 12-month servicing interval.
- 3.6 Reference (k) should be followed for maintenance and inspection of lifeboat air cylinders. Requirements for the air cylinders for totally enclosed lifeboats shall be the same, where applicable, as with Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus air bottles.
- 3.7 In addition to monthly inspections as specified in 8.0 below, reference (h) should be followed for conducting periodic air testing of immersion suits. Suits less than ten years old shall be tested at intervals not exceeding three years; suits older than ten years, or suits which have seams or closures that are in questionable condition may be required to be tested more frequently. Immersion suit air tests may be conducted on board ship if suitable equipment is available. Any necessary repairs should be conducted by an approved service provider in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations.
- 3.8 Annex 1 of reference (g) shall be followed for the inspection, maintenance of lifeboats, launching appliances, and on-load release gear.

4.0 Life Rafts

- 4.1 Life rafts provided in compliance with SOLAS Regulation III/31.1.4 are to be transportable and launchable by one person. They may be stowed in protected positions provided they are readily available at all times. Particular care should be given to their accessibility when deck cargoes are carried. Where appropriate, portable guard rails or bulwarks should be provided to facilitate launching.

4.2 On occasion, it may be necessary to temporarily carry persons on board in excess of the number currently authorized. When physically possible, the installed lifeboats should be recertified to provide the necessary capacity. If the existing lifeboats are already certified to their maximum capacity, the Administration may allow, for legitimate verifiable reasons, the substitution of inflatable life raft capacity appropriately installed in accordance with regulatory requirements to augment the required lifeboat complement as a temporary measure of equivalency. These temporary measures will be limited to the minimum period of time required for the additional persons to be on board and in general, will not exceed two (2) months. This accommodation will only be allowed with the specific approval of the Administration.

5.0 Lifeboat Damage

5.1 When any lifeboat is damaged and declared unseaworthy or is found in need of repair and no replacement boat is readily available, life raft(s) with capacity for all the persons on board may be substituted, as a temporary measure, but only with specific approval of the Administration. The minimum survival craft capacity prescribed by SOLAS Chapter III must be maintained.

5.2 Where the defective boat is a motorboat and there is no other motor lifeboat on board, the total survival craft capacity provided is to include a powered rescue boat meeting the requirements of Regulation III/31.2 of SOLAS.

5.3 These temporary measures will be limited to the minimum period of time required for replacement and, in general, will not exceed three (3) months.

6.0 Lifeboat Equipment Dispensation (LSA Code Section 4.4.8.32)

6.1 For the purposes of LSA Code Section 4.4.8.32, Mobile Offshore Drilling Units and Mobile Offshore Units (i.e., FPSO, FSU, or other permanent moored factory or storage vessels) while on station and being served by a standby vessel, or when on station and located within 25 kilometers (16 miles) of another manned platform, MODU, MOU, or from a harbor of safe refuge, are considered by this Administration to be engaged on a voyage that will permit the food rations (LSA Code Section 4.4.8.12) and fishing tackle (LSA code Section 4.4.8.26) to be dispensed with. Lifeboat equipment dispensations for all other vessels will be handled on a case by case basis. Requests for such dispensations should be forwarded to the Office of the Maritime Administrator in Reston Virginia.

7.0 Lifeboat Falls

7.1 In accordance with reference (a), lifeboat falls must be renewed when necessary due deterioration or at intervals of not more than five years, whichever is earlier. Additionally, falls must be turned end for end at intervals not exceeding 30 months.

7.2 In lieu of meeting the 7.1 requirement above for end-for-ending the falls, falls shall be periodically inspected and renewed at intervals of not more than four years or whenever necessary due to deterioration, whichever is earlier.

8.0 Immersion Suits and Thermal Protective Aids

- 8.1 Immersion suits shall comply with section 2.3 of reference (b).
- 8.2 At first Safety Equipment Survey after 30 June 2006:
- 8.2.1 An immersion suit shall be provided for every person on board the ship. Additional immersion suits shall be provided for each person on watch or at a normal work location that is remote from where immersion suits are normally stowed.
- 8.2.2 Reference (a) contains provisions for exempting vessels that are constantly engaged on voyages in warm climates from the requirement to carry immersion suits and/or thermal protective aids. Procedures for granting the exemption are found in Marshall Islands Technical Circular #4, reference (j).
- 8.3 Existing vessels until first Safety Equipment Survey after 30 June 2006:
- 8.3.1 For vessels operating exclusively on voyages within warm climates, immersion suits and thermal protective aids are not required. The thermal protective aids required by LSA Code Sections 4.1.5.1.24, 4.4.8.31 and 5.1.2.2.13, however, are an integral part of survival craft and rescue boat equipment which must be provided regardless of vessel route.
- 8.3.2 For vessels with open lifeboats operating above 50° North and 50° South latitudes, the Administration requires that immersion suits be provided for all persons on board.
- 8.3.3 For cargo vessels less than 85 meters in length operating above 30° North and 30° South latitudes, where only life rafts are carried in accordance with SOLAS, Chapter III, Regulation 31.1.3, all persons are to be provided with immersion suits.
- 8.3.4 The three (3) immersion suits per lifeboat required by SOLAS, Chapter III, Regulation 32.3.2 for cargo ships and 22.4.2 for passenger vessels are intended for use by the designated and/or certified persons in charge of the lifeboat. They may be kept in the staterooms of the assigned personnel.
- 8.3.5 All persons in the crew of a rescue boat are to be provided with immersion suits, if different from the persons in charge of the lifeboat noted in 8.3.4 above.
- 8.4 Immersion suits and thermal protective aids are to be assigned by the Master. It is recommended that they should be kept in staterooms along with life jackets.
- 8.5 A normal work location for the purposes of paragraph 8.2.1 is a location where a crew member carries out normal work functions other than watchkeeping. Examples include

but are not limited to: control rooms, machine shops, galleys, and offices. These locations would be considered remote if the individual could not reasonably retrieve their assigned immersion suit in the event of an emergency.

- 8.6 For purposes of paragraph 8.3.1 and the SOLAS exemption referred to in 8.2.2, the Administration considers voyages in warm climates to be those within the zone between 30° North and 30° South latitudes.
- 8.7 The immersion suits provided to each crew member may be counted towards the suits which are required for crew who are assigned to a rescue boat or marine evacuation system party.