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(Department of Trade, Employment and Communications)



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**Shipping Guidance Notice – 021**  
**This Shipping Guidance Notice consolidates SGN's No 5 and 16 and amends the number of Immersion Suits to be carried forward**

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To: Ship Owners, Operators, Masters and Officers

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**The Carriage, Inspection and Testing of Immersion Suits onboard Gibraltar registered ships.**

1. During the 78<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Maritime Safety Committee of IMO, amendments to SOLAS Chapter III Regulation 32.3 were adopted. The amendment introduces a new requirement for the carriage of immersion suits for all persons on board. (ref MSC 152(78))
2. The new requirements apply to cargo ships over 500gt which are not solely engaged on voyages in warm climates between the limits 30° North – 30° South and bulk carries irrespective of trading pattern. Under these regulations all cargo ships regardless of their date of construction, will be required to provide immersion suits for every person onboard not later than the first Safety Equipment Survey after 1 July 2006.

**Number of immersion suits**

3. The number of immersion suits required shall be the same as the total number of persons for which lifesaving appliances (LSA) is provided as stated on the Safety Equipment Certificate or Cargo Ship Safety Certificate. All immersion suits must comply with the EC Marine Equipment Directive (MED) and be type approved.

**Additional immersion suits**

4. Under the requirements of SOLAS Chapter III Regulation 32.3.3 – if a ship has any watch or work stations which are located remotely from the place or places where immersion suits are normally stowed, additional immersions shall be provided at these locations for the number of persons normally on watch or working at these locations at any time. The Gibraltar Maritime Administration requires as a minimum the following number of immersion suits to be provided:
  - 4.1. Wheel House 2 (but may be more dependent on the number of persons normally on duty).
  - 4.2. Engine Control Room 2 (but may be reduced to 1 on small vessels manned with one engine room personnel only).
  - 4.3. Forward Carpenter Shop / Bosun Store 2
  - 4.4. Other remotely located watch or work stations to provide for the number of persons normally working at those locations.

5. If a remotely stowed liferaft is required by SOLAS Chapter III, Regulation 31.1.4, then the Gibraltar Maritime Administration would require that additional immersion suits are provided for 3 crew members
6. These immersion suits may be combined with and may include the number provided at the Carpenter Shop / Bosun Store or other remotely located watch or work stations in the vicinity of the remotely stowed liferaft.
7. If a ship has any watch or work stations which are located remotely from the place, or places where immersion suits are normally stowed, additional immersion suits shall be provided at these locations for the number of persons normally on watch or working at those locations at any time. Immersion suits shall be so placed as to be readily accessible and their position shall be plainly indicated.

### **Stowage**

8. It is not practical for the Maritime Administration to dictate the storage location for immersion suits as this clearly differs from ship to ship. Owners and operators should therefore carry out an assessment to ascertain the best stowage location for their vessels and amend safety plans and familiarisation training accordingly.

### **Inspection and testing**

9. In addition to the requirements of SOLAS, IMO has published a number of circulars relating to the inspection and testing of immersion suits. MSC circular MSC/Circ 1047 gives "*Guidelines for monthly inspection of immersion suits and anti-exposure suits by ships crews*". MSC Circular MSC/Circ 1114 gives "*Guidelines for the periodic testing of immersion suits and anti-exposure suit seams and closures*".

### **Required action**

10. Persons with the responsibility relating to compliance matters on Gibraltar registered ships are requested to ensure that such ships are in full compliance with both current and future requirements for the carriage of immersion suits.

Alan Cubbin  
Maritime Administrator

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