

**SC
292**
(Feb 2020)**Ships intended to operate in low air temperature in Polar waters - Survival craft and rescue boat communications capabilities**

Interpretation of Polar Code (Res. MSC.385(94)), part I-A, paragraphs 10.2.2 and 10.3.2

Paragraph 1.2.7 of Part I-A of Polar Code reads:

“1.2.7 Maximum expected time of rescue means the time adopted for the design of equipment and system that provide survival support. It shall never be less than 5 days.”

Paragraph 10.2.2 of Part I-A of Polar Code reads:

“10.2.2 Survival craft and rescue boat communications capabilities

10.2.2.1 For ships intended to operate in low air temperature, all rescue boats and lifeboats, whenever released for evacuation, shall maintain capability for distress alerting, locating and on-scene communications.

10.2.2.2 For ships intended to operate in low air temperature, all other survival craft, whenever released, shall maintain capability for transmitting signals for location and for communication.

10.2.2.3 Mandatory communication equipment for use in survival craft, including liferafts, and rescue boats shall be capable of operation during the maximum expected time of rescue.”

Paragraph 10.3.2 of Part I-A of Polar Code reads:

“10.3.2 Survival craft and rescue boat communications capabilities

10.3.2.1 For ships intended to operate in low air temperature, in order to comply with the functional requirements of paragraph 10.2.2.1 above, all rescue boats and lifeboats, whenever released for evacuation, shall:

- .1 for distress alerting, carry one device for transmitting ship to shore alerts;*
- .2 in order to be located, carry one device for transmitting signals for location; and*
- .3 for on-scene communications, carry one device for transmitting and receiving on-scene communications.*

Note:

1. This UI is to be applied by Members on ships contracted for construction on or after 1 July 2020
2. The “contracted for construction” means the date on which the contract to build the vessel is signed between the prospective owner and the shipbuilder. For further details regarding the date of “contract for construction”, refer to IACS Procedural Requirement (PR) No. 29.

10.3.2.2 For ships intended to operate in low air temperature, in order to comply with the functional requirements of paragraph 10.2.2.2 above, all other survival craft shall:

.1 in order to be located, carry one device for transmitting signals for location; and

.2 for on-scene communications, carry one device for transmitting and receiving on-scene communications.

10.3.2.3 In order to comply with the functional requirements of paragraph 10.2.2.3 above, recognizing the limitations arising from battery life, procedures shall be developed and implemented such that mandatory communication equipment for use in survival craft, including liferafts, and rescue boats are available for operation during the maximum expected time of rescue.”

Interpretation

1. All rescue boats, all lifeboats and all other survival crafts carried by the ship, notwithstanding the redundancy in aggregate capacity of survival crafts required by SOLAS Regulation III/21 and Regulation III/31, and taking into account the different possible distress scenarios, are considered able to be released for evacuation simultaneously and shall be provided with mandatory communication equipment as required by paragraph 10.3.2 of Part I-A of Polar Code accordingly.

2. The expressions “shall maintain capability for”, “shall be capable of operation during the maximum expected time of rescue” and “are available for operation during the maximum expected time of rescue” used in paragraphs 10.2.2.1 and 10.2.2.2, 10.2.2.3, 10.3.2.3 of Part I-A, mean ability of mandatory communication equipment for use in survival craft, including liferafts, and rescue boats to maintain the ready-for-operation state within the maximum expected time of rescue at the Polar Service Temperature (PST) assigned to the vessel, and after that to be capable to perform its functions at the PST assigned to the vessel with the operating time not less than specified in respective existing performance standards*.

Note: For example, it is not required that an EPIRB being used for distress alerting continues distress messaging for maximum expected time of rescue, and two-way VHF radiotelephone apparatus being used for transmitting and receiving on-scene communications does not need to be technically in operation at its highest rated power with a duty cycle of 1:9 for maximum expected time of rescue, as specified in Paragraph 1.2.7 of Part I-A of Polar Code.

3. Procedures referred to in paragraph 10.3.2.3 can include both operational requirements and any other means including technical solutions i.e. thermal insulation, chemical heat sources, additional batteries, rechargeable batteries with respective chargers, etc., and shall be documented in Polar Water Operational Manual (PWOM).

* EPIRB - Res. A.810(19) and MSC.471(101);
Radar transponder - Res. A.802(19);
AIS-SART - Res. MSC.246 (83);
Two-way VHF radiotelephone apparatus - Res. MSC.149(77).

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