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MSC.1/Circ.1277  
23 May 2008

**INTERIM RECOMMENDATION ON CONDITIONS FOR AUTHORIZATION OF  
SERVICE PROVIDERS FOR LIFEBOATS, LAUNCHING APPLIANCES AND  
ON-LOAD RELEASE GEAR**

1 The Maritime Safety Committee, at its eighty-fourth session (7 to 16 May 2008), approved the Interim Recommendation on conditions for authorization of service providers for lifeboats, launching appliances and on-load release gear, set out in the annex, following the recommendations made by the Sub-Committee on Ship Design and Equipment, at its fifty-first session.

2 Member Governments are invited to use the annexed Interim Recommendation when applying the relevant provisions of SOLAS regulation III/20 and the Guidelines for periodic servicing and maintenance of lifeboats, launching appliances and on-load release gear (MSC.1/Circ.1206), and to bring it to the attention of all parties concerned.

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**ANNEX****INTERIM RECOMMENDATION ON CONDITIONS FOR AUTHORIZATION OF SERVICE PROVIDERS FOR LIFEBOATS, LAUNCHING APPLIANCES AND ON-LOAD RELEASE GEAR**

1 Administrations should ensure that the thorough examination, operational testing, repair, and overhaul of lifeboats, launching appliances and on-load release gear are carried out in accordance with SOLAS regulation III/20 by service providers authorized by them that are qualified in these operations for each make and type of equipment for which they provide the service. Such qualification should include, as a minimum:

- .1 employment and documentation of personnel certified in accordance with a recognized national, international or industry standard as applicable, or an equipment manufacturer's established certification program. In either case, the certification program should be based on the guidelines in the appendix for each make and type of equipment for which service is to be provided;
- .2 availability of sufficient tools, and in particular any specialized tools specified in the equipment manufacturer's instructions, including portable tools as needed for work to be carried out on board ship;
- .3 access to sufficient materials, spare parts and accessories as specified by the equipment manufacturer for repairing lifeboats, launching appliances and on-load release gear, as applicable;
- .4 for servicing and repair work involving disassembly or adjustment of on-load release mechanisms, availability of the equipment manufacturer's specifications, and genuine replacement parts as specified or supplied by the equipment manufacturer; and
- .5 a documented quality system, to include at least the following:
  - .1 code of conduct for the relevant activity;
  - .2 maintenance and calibration of equipment;
  - .3 training programmes for personnel;
  - .4 supervision and verification to ensure compliance with operational procedures;
  - .5 recording and reporting of information;
  - .6 quality management of subsidiaries and agents;
  - .7 job preparation; and
  - .8 periodic review of work process procedures, complaints, corrective actions and issuance, maintenance and control of documents.

A documented quality system complying with the most current version of the ISO 9000 series and including the above items, would be considered acceptable.

2 Administrations should arrange for regular inspections of service providers to ensure that work continues to be carried out based on this interim recommendation, and should withdraw the authorization of service providers who are not in compliance. For service providers situated in other countries, the Administration may accept or recognize service providers authorized, checked or inspected by surveyors nominated for the purpose or by recognized organizations or by other SOLAS Contracting Governments.

3 Administrations should ensure that information regarding authorized service providers for lifeboats, launching appliances and on-load release gear is made available to mariners.

4 Administrations should take measures they consider appropriate to ensure that national manufacturers of equipment certified under SOLAS chapter III for installation and use onboard ships undertake to ensure that equipment, instructions, specialised tools, spare parts, training and accessories, as required, are available to independent service providers in a timely and cost effective manner.

5 In cases where an equipment manufacturer is no longer in business or no longer provides technical support, Administrations may authorize service providers for the equipment on the basis of prior authorization for the equipment and/or long term experience and demonstrated expertise as an authorized service provider.

6 The contents of this interim recommendation apply equally to manufacturers when they are acting as service providers.

## APPENDIX

**GUIDELINES FOR CERTIFICATION OF PERSONNEL FOR SERVICING AND MAINTENANCE OF LIFEBOATS, LAUNCHING APPLIANCES AND ON-LOAD RELEASE GEAR****General**

1 The objective of these Guidelines is to establish standards for certification of personnel for servicing and maintenance of lifeboats, launching appliances and on-load release gear, based on annex 1 to MSC.1/Circ.1206.

2 Personnel for the work specified in paragraph 12 of annex 1 to MSC.1/Circ.1206 should be certified in accordance with a certification programme based on these Guidelines.

**Education and training**

3 Education and training for initial certification of personnel should address, as a minimum:

- .1 causes of lifeboat accidents;
- .2 relevant rules and regulations, including international conventions;
- .3 design and construction of lifeboats, including on-load release gear and launching appliances;
- .4 education and practical training in the procedures specified in annex 1 of MSC.1/Circ.1206 for which certification is sought;
- .5 detailed procedures for thorough examination, operational testing, repair and overhaul of lifeboat, launching appliances and on-load release gear, as applicable; and
- .6 procedures for issuing a report of service and statement of fitness for purpose based on MSC.1/Circ.1206 (annex 1, paragraph 15).

4 The education and training for the personnel should include practical technical training on actual inspection and maintenance using the equipment (lifeboats, launching appliances and/or on-load release gear) for which the personnel are to be certified. The technical training should include disassembly, reassembly, correct operation and adjustment of the equipment. Classroom training should be supplemented by field experience in the operations for which certification is sought, under the supervision of an experienced senior certified person.

5 Prior to issuance of certification, a competency assessment should be satisfactorily completed, using the equipment for which the personnel are to be certified.

### **Terms of validity of certificates and update training**

6 Upon completion of training and competency assessment, a certificate should be issued defining the level of qualification and the scope of the certification (e.g., makes and types of equipment). The expiry date should clearly be written on the certificate. The expiry date should be within three years from the date of issuance of the certificate.

7 A competency assessment, and refresher training as appropriate, on the basis of that assessment, should be conducted to renew the certification.

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