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SHIPPING NOTICE NO. MACI 003/2007

THE CARRIAGE, INSPECTION AND TESTING OF IMMERSION SUITS ONBOARD CAYMAN ISLANDS SHIPS.

THIS SHIPPING NOTICE SUPERSEDES SHIPPING NOTICE 04/2005

THIS NOTICE IS APPLICABLE TO ALL CAYMAN FLAG SHIPS AND YACHTS IRRESPECTIVE OF GT; AND IS DIRECTED PRIMARILY AT:

- OWNERS,
- MANAGERS,
- MASTERS AND OFFICERS,
- SURVEYORS AND;
- CLASSIFICATION SOCIETIES,

APPLICABLE TO ALL CAYMAN FLAG SHIPS AND YACHTS IRRESPECTIVE OF GT.

NOTE: This shipping notice was originally issued in January 2005. It has been revised to clarify the requirements for the carriage of additional immersion suits and the need to carry immersion suits of appropriate sizes for the crew onboard.

1. Background

- 1.1. During the 78th meeting of the Maritime Safety Committee of IMO, amendments to SOLAS regulation III/32.3 were adopted. Under these amendments all cargo¹ 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 01 July 2006.
- 1.2. In addition to the carriage requirements in the revised III/32.3, additional immersion suits should be carried for persons on watch and for use at remotely located survival craft stations. The immersion suits carried for persons on watch should be stowed on the bridge, in the engine control room and at any other manned watch station.
- 1.3. Administrations may exempt ships (other than bulk carriers) from the above requirements if they are satisfied that the voyage pattern of the ship makes the carriage of immersion suits un-necessary. Applications for such exemptions will be considered by the Cayman Islands Shipping Registry (CISR) on an individual “case by case” basis only.
- 1.4. In addition to the requirements of SOLAS and the Life Saving Appliance (LSA) Code, 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*”.

2. Risk assessment for variation in physical stature amongst crewmembers.

- 2.1. Although most manufacturers provide “adult” or “universal” sized suits, these suits may not be suitable for all persons onboard. Typically, such suits are intended for persons between 1.5 – 1.9m in height and 50 – 150kg in weight.
- 2.2. Should a crew member fall outside the height and weight range of the “universal” or “adult” suit, they can not be considered as being provided with an immersion suit if only the “universal” or “adult” sized suits are carried onboard.
- 2.3. Sufficient additional immersion suits should be carried so that all persons onboard are provided with an immersion suit suitable for their height and weight.
- 2.4. The number and sizes of these additional immersion suits should be based on a risk assessment carried out by the company.

¹ SOLAS Chapter I, Part A Regulation 2(f): “A cargo ship is any ship which is not a passenger ship”.

3. **MSC Circular MSC/Circ.1047.**

3.1. This circular details the monthly onboard checks which should be conducted and recorded to meet the requirements of SOLAS III/36.1

3.2. The checks include:

- 3.2.1. Closures and the general condition of the storage bag to check ease of removal of the suit from the storage bag, to confirm donning instructions are legible and confirmation that the suit is the type and size identified on the bag.
- 3.2.2. Visual inspection of the suit confirming that it is dry inside and out and free of rips, tears or punctures. Any rips, tears or punctures are to be repaired by a repair station authorized by the suit manufacturer. Until repaired, the suit is to be removed from service.
- 3.2.3. Confirmation that all zippers are free and operating correctly. All zippers should be lubricated in accordance with manufactures recommendations. If a zipper is not functional, the suit must be removed from service and discarded or returned to the manufacturer or a suitable repair station.
- 3.2.4. Any inflatable head support and/or buoyancy ring is to be checked for damage and to ensure it remains properly attached. At least quarterly, the head support/buoyancy ring is to be inflated and tested for leaks. Any leaks are to be repaired by a repair station authorized by the suit manufacturer.
- 3.2.5. Records of the above checks are to be kept in accordance with SOLAS III/20.7 and SOLAS III/36.7.

3.3. **MSC Circular MSC/Circ.1114.**

- 3.3.1. This circular details the testing requirements for immersion suit and anti-exposure suit seams and closures. Paragraph 3 of the annex to this circular detail the air pressure testing requirements. On Cayman Islands ships, these tests are to be carried out every three years for suits up to ten years of age and annually for suits over ten years of age.
- 3.3.2. These air pressure tests and any subsequent repairs should be undertaken by a test / repair station authorized by the suit manufacturer.
- 3.3.3. Records of the last air pressure test of the immersion suits are to be retained onboard.

4. **Required actions.**

- 4.1. Persons with responsibilities relating to compliance matters on Cayman Islands ships are requested to ensure that such ships are in full compliance with both the current and future requirements for the carriage of immersion suits.
- 4.2. Such persons are also urged to ensure that sufficient extra immersion suits of appropriate sizes are carried so that if immersion suits are found to be unsuitable for continued service at any of the required inspections and tests, the ship continues to comply with the requirements.