



Marine Notice 12/2013  
Supersedes 12/2007

## Evaluation and replacement of lifeboat release and retrieval systems

### Purpose

The purpose of this Marine Notice is to provide advice to ship owners and ship operators regarding compliance with the new SOLAS regulation III/1.5 adopted by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) through resolution MSC.317(89) and related amendments to the International Life-Saving Appliances (LSA) Code adopted by resolution MSC.320(89). Amendments to the provisions of the *Revised recommendation on testing of life-saving appliances* (resolution MSC.81(70)) were also adopted by resolution MSC.321(89) to align with the LSA Code amendments. The new SOLAS regulation and associated amendments to the LSA Code came into force on 1 January 2013.

### Background

Accidents with lifeboats, often involving serious injuries and casualties, can be related to malfunction, failure or mal-operation of on-load release equipment, whilst many others can be attributed to poor maintenance or incorrect setting of the equipment. Many such accidents have occurred during lifeboat drills, raising questions about the safety of on-load release mechanisms. The new SOLAS regulation III/1.5 and the associated amendments to the LSA Code are the outcomes of the IMO's work to address this important matter.

### Guidance

The new SOLAS regulation III/1.5 requires that for all ships, "on-load release mechanisms" (also called "lifeboat release and retrieval system") not complying with paragraphs 4.4.7.6.4 to 4.4.7.6.6 of the LSA Code, as amended by resolution MSC.320(89), be replaced or modified for compliance not later than the next scheduled dry-docking after 1 July 2014, but not later than 1 July 2019.

The IMO published circular MSC.1/Circ.1392 - Guidelines for evaluation and replacement of lifeboat release and retrieval systems (the Guidelines) which should be used for the evaluation and modification or replacement, as appropriate, of lifeboat release and

retrieval systems. All ships fitted with on-load release systems for lifeboats are strongly urged to be equipped with fall preventer devices in accordance with the Guidelines until the system is compliant with the amended requirements of the LSA Code.

Ship owners and operators should promptly evaluate and modify or replace systems, as applicable, so that lifeboat release and retrieval systems on all ships comply with the LSA Code not later than the first scheduled dry-docking after 1 July 2014, but not later than 1 July 2019.

Ship owners, ship operators, Recognised Organisations (ROs), seafarers, lifeboat manufacturers and service providers should note that the evaluation and possible modification or replacement should be carried out in accordance with the Guidelines.

ROs acting on behalf of AMSA are authorised to carry out a design review of lifeboat release and retrieval systems to ensure compliance with paragraphs 4.4.7.6.4 to 4.4.7.6.6 of the LSA Code and to observe performance tests to verify that the lifeboat release and retrieval systems are in accordance with the Guidelines. A statement of acceptance of the installation of replacement release and retrieval system to an existing lifeboat will be issued by a RO.

Copies of the relevant IMO resolutions and the circular are available on the IMO website or from AMSA.

<http://www.imo.org/knowledgecentre/indexofimoresolutions/Pages/Default.aspx>  
<http://www.imo.org/OurWork/Circulars/Pages/IMODOCS.aspx>

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