

	CIRCULAR 2013-008		
	DEPARTMENT OF MARINE SERVICES AND MERCHANT SHIPPING (ADOMS)		
	Recovery of Persons from the Water	Ref	SOLAS III – 17.1 MSC Res 338(91) MSC.1 Circ 1447

**Companies operating ships under the flag of Antigua and Barbuda,
Ships registered under the flag of Antigua and Barbuda,
Authorised Recognised Organisations (ROs)**

Introduction.

In November 2012 the IMO Maritime Safety Committee adopted a number of amendments to SOLAS. One of these is a new regulation 17-1 to follow the existing regulation 17 in Chapter III. This Circular is intended to provide early advice to shipowners and others of the requirement and highlight the IMO guidance on preparation of plans.

New requirements.

The new regulation 17-1 states:

17-1 Recovery of persons from the water

1 All ships shall have ship-specific plans and procedures for recovery of persons from the water, taking into account the guidelines developed by the Organization. The plans and procedures shall identify the equipment intended to be used for recovery purposes and measures to be taken to minimize the risk to shipboard personnel involved in recovery operations. Ships constructed before 1 July 2014 shall comply with this requirement by the first periodical or renewal safety equipment survey of the ship to be carried out after 1 July 2014, whichever comes first.

2 Ro-ro passenger ships which comply with regulation 26.4 shall be deemed to comply with this regulation.

* Refer to the Guidelines for the development of plans and procedures for recovery of persons from the water (MSC.1/Circ.1447)."

The target date is the first periodical or renewal Cargo Ship Safety Equipment survey after 1st July 2014. The plans and procedures do not require approval but will be checked as a part of the Cargo Ship Safety Equipment survey.

Appendix 1 to this Circular contains the text of the IMO Circular on guidance for the development of plans and procedures. It should be noted that the SOLAS amendment clearly states that the plans and procedures are to be "ship-specific" and it is recommended that owners and managers take early action, taking into account the guidelines, to develop plans and procedures that relate specifically to each ship and to the facilities and equipment on board that ship.

May 2013

Appendix 1

Text of the IMO guidelines in MSC.1/Circ 1447

GUIDELINES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF PLANS AND PROCEDURES FOR RECOVERY OF PERSONS FROM THE WATER

1. General

- 1.1. Life-saving and other equipment carried on board may be used to recover persons from the water, even though this may require using such equipment in unconventional ways.
- 1.2. These Guidelines should be read in conjunction with the *Guide to recovery techniques* (MSC.1/Circ.1182) and the *Guide for cold water survival* (MSC.1/Circ.1185/Rev.1).
- 1.3. In particular, the *Guide to recovery techniques* (MSC.1/Circ.1182) provides a number of examples of how certain types of equipment can be used to recover persons from the water; and can also be used for the development of plans and procedures for recovery of persons from the water.
- 1.4. The initiation or continuation of recovery operations should be at the discretion of the master of the recovering ship, in accordance with the provisions of SOLAS regulation III/17-1.
- 1.5. The plans and procedures should be considered as a part of the emergency preparedness plan required by paragraph 8 of part A of the International Safety Management (ISM) Code.

2. Matters to be considered when developing plans and procedures.

- 2.1. A risk assessment should be conducted and documented when developing plans and procedures for recovery of persons from the water, including equipment intended to be used, taking into account the anticipated conditions and ship-specific characteristics.
- 2.2. The recovery plans and procedures should facilitate the transfer of persons from the water to the ship while minimizing the risk of injury from impact with the ship's side or other structures, including the recovery appliance itself.
- 2.3. To the extent practicable, recovery procedures should provide for recovery of persons in a horizontal or near-horizontal ("deck-chair") position. Recovery in a vertical position should be avoided whenever possible as it risks cardiac arrest in hypothermic casualties (refer to the *Guide for cold water survival* (MSC.1/Circ.1185/Rev.1)).
- 2.4. If carried, dedicated recovery equipment should be clearly marked with the maximum number of persons it can accommodate, based on a weight of 82.5 kg per person.
- 2.5. Recovery operations should be conducted at a position clear of the ship's propellers and, as far as practicable, within the ship's parallel mid-body section.
- 2.6. A source of illumination and, where required, a source of power should be available for the area where the recovery operation is conducted.

2.7. Ship-specific procedures for the recovery of persons from the water should specify the anticipated conditions under which a recovery operation may be conducted without causing undue hazard to the ship and the ship's crew, taking into account, but not limited to:

2.7.1. manoeuvrability of the ship;

2.7.2. freeboard of the ship;

2.7.3. points on the ship to which casualties may be recovered;

2.7.4. characteristics and limitations of equipment intended to be used for recovery operations;

2.7.5. available crew and personal protective equipment (PPE);

2.7.6. wind force, direction and spray;

2.7.7. significant wave height (H_s);

2.7.8. period of waves;

2.7.9. swell; and

2.7.10. safety of navigation.

3. Competence and familiarization.

3.1. Drills should ensure that crew are familiar with the plans, procedures and equipment for recovery of persons from the water. Such drills may be conducted in conjunction with routine man-overboard drills.
