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4 ALBERT EMBANKMENT  
LONDON SE1 7SR  
Telephone: +44 (0)20 7735 7611 Fax: +44 (0)20 7587 3210

MSC.1/Circ.1447  
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**GUIDELINES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF PLANS AND PROCEDURES  
FOR RECOVERY OF PERSONS FROM THE WATER**

1 The Maritime Safety Committee, at its ninety-first session (26 to 30 November 2012), approved the *Guidelines for the development of plans and procedures for recovery of persons from the water*, set out in the annex, aiming at providing additional guidance on the application of the requirements in SOLAS regulation III/17-1.

2 Member Governments are invited to bring the annexed Guidelines to the attention of all interested parties.

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## ANNEX

### 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:

- .1 manoeuvrability of the ship;
- .2 freeboard of the ship;
- .3 points on the ship to which casualties may be recovered;
- .4 characteristics and limitations of equipment intended to be used for recovery operations;
- .5 available crew and personal protective equipment (PPE);
- .6 wind force, direction and spray;
- .7 significant wave height ( $H_s$ );
- .8 period of waves;
- .9 swell; and
- .10 safety of navigation.

### **3 Competence and familiarization**

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.

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