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MSC.1/Circ.1535  
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**UNIFIED INTERPRETATIONS RELATING TO THE PROTOCOL OF 1988 RELATING TO  
THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON LOAD LINES, 1966**

1 The Maritime Safety Committee, at its ninety-sixth session (11 to 20 May 2016), in order to facilitate global and consistent implementation of requirements concerning sill and coaming heights for openings on top of deckhouses and companionways of the 1988 Load Lines Protocol, approved unified interpretations relating to the Protocol of 1988 relating to the International Convention on Load Lines, 1966, prepared by the Sub-Committee on Ship Design and Construction, at its third session (18 to 22 January 2016), as set out in the annex.

2 Member States are invited to apply the annexed unified interpretations and to bring them to the attention of all parties concerned.

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## ANNEX

### UNIFIED INTERPRETATIONS RELATING TO THE PROTOCOL OF 1988 RELATING TO THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON LOAD LINES, 1966

#### Regulation 13 – Position of hatchways, doorways and ventilators

1 For the purpose of these regulations, two positions of hatchways, doorways and ventilators are defined as follows:

Position 1 – Upon freeboard decks and raised quarterdecks, or other exposed decks\* lower than one standard height of superstructure above the freeboard deck, and upon exposed decks\* situated forward of a point located a quarter of the ship's length from the forward perpendicular that are located lower than two standard heights of superstructure above the freeboard deck.

Position 2 – Upon exposed decks\* situated abaft a quarter of the ship's length from the forward perpendicular and located at least one standard height of superstructure above the freeboard deck and lower than two standard heights of superstructure above the freeboard deck.

Upon exposed decks\* situated forward of a point located a quarter of the ship's length from the forward perpendicular and located at least two standard heights of superstructure above the freeboard deck and lower than three standard heights of superstructure above the freeboard deck.

#### Regulation 20 – Air pipes

2 Where air pipes to ballast and other tanks extend above:

- .1 the freeboard deck; or
- .2 other exposed decks\* lower than two standard heights of superstructure above the freeboard deck,

the exposed parts of the pipes should be of substantial construction, and the height from the deck to the point where water may have access below should be at least:

- .1 760 mm on the freeboard deck or other exposed decks\* lower than one standard height of superstructure above the freeboard deck; and
- .2 450 mm on other exposed decks\* lower than two standard heights of superstructure above freeboard deck.

**Note:** Flush bolted access covers, which are of substantial construction and are secured by gaskets and closely spaced bolts to maintain water tightness, are not subject to the minimum sill height requirements.

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\* "Exposed decks" include top decks of superstructures, deckhouses, companionways and other similar deck structures.