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27 December 2012

To: Shipowners / Ship Managers and Classification Societies

Dear Sir/Madam,

Guidelines for Hong Kong Registered Ships Assigned with Multiple Load Lines (Verification the Change of Freeboard)

In the past, Hong Kong ships holding multiple International Load Line Certificates were required to be verified by Recognized Organization (RO) surveyor whenever shipowners wished to make changes to the assigned freeboard. This circular letter serves to advise that with immediate effect Marine Department accepts that the verification can be conducted by the ship's master instead of the RO surveyor. For change of the assigned freeboard, the master should follow the following guidelines :-

- a. Only one set of load line marks shall be visible on the ship's side and the associated load line certificate shall be displayed at all times;
- b. The remaining load line marks shall be properly obliterated with paint and the remaining load line certificate(s) not being used shall be kept away from the one in used;
- c. An official entry shall be made in the official log book every time the load line mark has been changed; and
- d. The Freeboard Assignment and Load Line Certificates not corresponding to the International Load Line Certificate in use shall be kept away from the one in use. The following certificates with indication of maximum dead weight are considered applicable to all multiple load line conditions. (i.e. Cargo Ship Safety Construction

Certificate; Cargo Ship Safety Equipment Certificate; and International Oil Pollution Prevention Certificate).

With a view to ensuring masters of the ships having multiple load lines adhere to the aforementioned requirements, it is recommended that shipboard safety management system on such ships should include appropriate procedures and instructions for such purposes.

A letter of approval issued by this Department to carry more than one International Load Line Certificate and a copy of this letter shall be kept on board.

The previous circular letter on this subject dated 20 December 2006 is hereby superseded by this circular letter.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Senior Surveyor/ Cargo Ships Safety Section at

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Yours faithfully,

(No signature on website copy)

(S.H. Tse)
Senior Surveyor/Cargo Ships Safety Section
for Director of Marine