



MARINE INFORMATION NOTICE

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The scope of the Marine Information Notice publication is to provide the Shipping Sector with information relevant to RINA, its organization, initiatives and services as well as to disseminate information of a general nature which in RINA view may be of interest. The information provided does not intend to be exhaustive and is given for reference only.

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For further information please contact:
Giorgio De Sciora,
Safety - Maritime Labour and Dangerous Goods
Technical Function
RINA Head Office | via Corsica 12 | 16128 Genova
tel +39 010 5385 268 | fax +39 010 5351000

MNO EVALUATION OF LIFEBOAT RELEASE AND RETRIEVAL SYSTEMS (LRRS) AND FITTING OF FALL PREVENTER DEVICES (FPDS)

Foreword

In response to accidents resulting from the incorrect use or failure of on-load release systems on lifeboats, the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) at its 89th session held on 20 May 2011, has adopted amendments to SOLAS Chapter III and the Life Saving Appliance (LSA) Code in an effort to prevent such incidents and to improve the level of safety on board the ships by introducing higher and stricter safety standards.

Applicability and implications for the interested parties

New amendments to SOLAS Regulation III/1.5 and to Chapter IV of the LSA Code, which shall enter into force on **1 January 2013**, are related to the on-load release mechanisms fitted on board **new and existing** cargo and passenger vessels and they will affect lifeboat manufacturers, ship-owners, shipbuilders and lifeboat release and retrieval systems (LRRS) manufacturers.

The new amendments introduced the following deadline for the compliance of the LRRS fitted on board:

“For all ships any on-load release systems that do not comply with paragraphs 4.4.7.6.4 to 4.4.7.6.6 of the revised LSA Code must be replaced at the first scheduled dry-docking after 1 July 2014, but no later than 1 July 2019”

Although the required changes do not come into force for a number of years, it is to be noted that IMO has published the following documents in order to achieve a higher and earlier decree of safety:

1. MSC.1/Circ.1393 “Early application of new SOLAS Regulation III/1.5” which states that:
 - a) *“For ships constructed (having their keel laid) on or after 1 July 2014, on-load release and retrieval systems shall comply with the revised LSA Code; and*
 - b) *“For ships constructed on or after 20 May 2011 but before 1 July 2014, Member Governments are encouraged to initiate, at the earliest opportunity, the approval process of the on-load release and retrieval systems in compliance with the revised LSA Code in order to be fitted on board before 1 July 2014.*

2. MSC.1/Circ.1392 “Guidelines for Evaluation and Replacement of Lifeboat Release and Retrieval Systems” which states that:

“Member Governments, ship-owners and manufacturers of lifeboat release and retrieval systems are also strongly urged, pending the entry into force of SOLAS regulation III/1.5, to use said Guidelines to evaluate existing lifeboat release and retrieval systems at the earliest available opportunity”.

In light of the above, it is advisable to begin, at the earliest opportunity, the evaluation of the lifeboat release and retrieval systems fitted on board ships and take action as may be necessary to ensure that they comply with the new regulation.

The whole process of the evaluation of the LRRS fitted on board ships is to be completed within 1 July 2013 and can be summarized as it follows:

- self-assessment of the existing LRRS to be carried out by the manufacturer;
- design review to be carried out by the Flag Administration or by the RO;
- upon successful completion of the design review, a performance test (for each type) is to be carried out by the manufacturer and witnesses by the Flag Administration or by the RO.

At the end of the above process the flag Administration should report to IMO whether each type of LRRS:

1. complies with the revised LSA Code; or
2. will comply after having been modified; or
3. is non-compliant and it is to be replaced with an approved LRRS with complies with the revised LSA Code.

Furthermore ship-owners and operators must ensure that an overhaul examination of all LRRS compliant with the revised LSA Code is carried out by the manufacturer or by one of their representatives, in accordance with Annex 1 of MLSC.1/Circ.1206/Rev.1, not later than the first scheduled dry-docking after 1 July 2014.

Interim risk mitigation measure: fitting and Use of Fall Preventer Devices (FPDs)

IMO MSC.1/Circ.1392 “Guidelines for Evaluation and Replacement of Lifeboat Release and Retrieval Systems” advises that Fall Preventer Devices (FPDs) should be employed for each existing LRRS, in accordance with MSC.1/Circ.1327 “Guidelines for the Fitting and Use of Fall Preventer Devices (FPDs)” until such time as the LRRS fitted to the lifeboats have been evaluated and either found to be compliant, or are modified to be compliant, or are replaced with a new RRS.

The FPD Guidelines also state that *“A Fall Preventer Device (FPD) can be used to minimise the risk of injury or death by providing a secondary alternate load path in the event of failure of the on-load hook or its release mechanism or of accidental release of the on-load hook. However, FPDs should not be regarded as a substitute for a safe on-load release mechanism.”*

The compulsorily application of said MSC/Circ. 1392 shall be established by the Flag Administration; this, for the time being, has already been done by at least one (Malta)

RINA is willing to support its Clients in the application of the above-mentioned requirements.

For more detailed information please contact Segreteria_TCHU@rina.org.