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GUIDANCE ON SAFETY WHEN TRANSFERRING PERSONS AT SEA

1 The Maritime Safety Committee, at its ninety-third session (14 to 23 May 2014) and the Marine Environment Protection Committee, at its sixty-sixth session (31 March to 4 April 2014) approved the *Guidance on safety when transferring persons at sea*, as set out in the annex.

2 Member Governments and international organizations are invited to bring this circular to the attention of all parties concerned.

ANNEX

GUIDANCE ON SAFETY WHEN TRANSFERRING PERSONS AT SEA

General

1 This document provides *Guidance on safety when transferring persons at sea*.

Scope of application

2 This Guidance is intended to apply to the transfer of all persons at sea by means of transport vessels with the exception of the transfer of pilots to all ships and passengers to passenger ships, for which other guidelines have been issued by the Organization¹.

3 When performing transfers of personnel at sea, there are a number of considerations that should be taken into account and safety measures to be addressed to ensure that the transfer is carried out in a safe manner.

4 As a minimum, the following list of conditions should be assessed every time a person is to be transferred at sea.

Preparation:

- .1 Is it necessary to carry out the operation at sea?
- .2 Is all necessary equipment to be used during the transfer in proper order and available for immediate use?
- .3 Is the person being transferred capable of performing the tasks involved?
- .4 Are the conditions of weather and wind suitable for a safe transfer or is it possible to position the ship so that it provides shelter during the transfer?
- .5 Is the operation and the way it is carried out agreed and understood by those involved?
- .6 Is the transport vessel suitable for the task and compliant with the relevant local regulations?
- .7 Is the crew of the transport vessel trained to handle a man overboard situation and alert local authorities?
- .8 Is the transport vessel equipped to respond to a man overboard situation?

Practical considerations during the transfer:

- .9 Are all outdoor surfaces being used for the transfer non-slip, free of ice, snow, etc.?

¹ Resolution A.1045(27) on *Pilot transfer arrangements* and MSC.1/Circ.1417 on *Guidelines for passenger ship tenders*.

- .10 Does the conning position of the transport vessel provide a sufficient view of the area from where the transfer is to be made?
- .11 Are all the areas involved in the transfer sufficiently lit?
- .12 Does the ship use a pilot ladder, accommodation ladder, etc., suitable for the purpose and has it been fitted correctly?
- .13 Have arrangements been made to use an accommodation ladder in conjunction with the pilot ladder (i.e. a combination arrangement) where the distance from sea level to the point of access to, or egress from, the ship exceeds 9 metres?
- .14 Are lifebuoys located in an easily accessible position at the place of transfer in both the transport vessel and the ship?
- .15 Are sufficient crew members ready to provide assistance, both on board the transport vessel and the ship?
- .16 Are the crew members on board the transport vessel who provide assistance during the transfer fitted with a suitable lifejacket, and has it been considered whether they should also be fitted with a suitable immersion suit or protective suit, in consideration of the season and other conditions?
- .17 Has it been considered whether assisting crew members should be secured by means of a safety line, in consideration of the arrangement of the working vessel, the conditions of the transfer and the conditions of weather and wind, etc.?
- .18 Is the person transferred fitted with a lifejacket, and has it been considered – especially in connection with low water temperatures – whether he/she should also be wearing an immersion suit or protective suit?
- .19 Has it been agreed that luggage is transferred separately?
- .20 Are the radio and/or visual communications between the personnel involved established and maintained during transfer operations?
