



**MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND WORKS
DEPARTMENT OF MERCHANT SHIPPING
LEMESOS**

01 July 2006

Circular No. 12 /2006

TEN 5.13.09
TEN 4.28.03.5
TEN 16.17.18

To all Owners, Managers
and Representatives
of ships under the Cyprus Flag.

To all recognised Classification Societies
and Inspectors of Cyprus Ships

**Subject: Immersion Suits
Interpretation needed for the implementation of new provisions**

Further to my Circular No. 25/2005 dated 4 October 2005, on the above subject, please note the following:

The Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) of the International Maritime Organization adopted on 20 May 2004, with Resolution MSC.152(78) amendments to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), 1974, as amended. These amendments entered into force on 01 July 2006.

1. With reference to the above amendments, according to paragraph 3 of regulation 32/Ch III/SOLAS 1974, as amended, an immersion suit must be provided for every person on board cargo ships.
2. A ship shall continue to carry the number of lifejackets required by regulation 7.2/Ch III/SOLAS 1974, as amended, even if the immersion suits onboard are classified as lifejackets.
3. A ship other than a bulk carrier, as defined in regulation 1/Ch IX/ SOLAS 1974, as amended, which is constantly engaged on voyages in warm climates, may be exempted from the said requirement. The Department of Merchant Shipping, having considered the Guidelines for Assessment of Thermal Protection (MSC/Circ. 1046), designates the following as warm climate sea areas for the scope of exempting ships from this regulation:
 - (i) The sector of the globe between latitude 30 degrees North and 30 degrees South.
 - (ii) The part of the Mediterranean Sea south of latitude of 35 degrees.
 - (iii) The Mediterranean Sea during the summer period (between 01/04 – 31/10)

(iv) The coasts of Africa (within 20 nautical miles from the shore) not included in (i) and (ii) above.

4. A Workstation is any place of the ship where the crew is occupied performing its normal duties (except watch keeping duties). Remotely located workstations are those located more than 100 metres, measured horizontally, from the place where the immersion suits are stowed. If a ship has such remote workstations, or places where additional liferafts (fwd or aft) are required in accordance with paragraph 1.4 of regulation 31/Ch III/SOLAS 1974, as amended, then, at least two (2) additional immersion suits must be placed at each of those stations.
5. A Watch station is any place of the ship where the crew performs its normal watch keeping duties. Remotely located watch stations are those located more than 50 metres, measured horizontally, from the place where the immersion suits are stowed. If a ship has such remotely located watch stations, then at least two (2) additional immersion suits must be placed at each of those watch stations.
6. Quantity and Storage of Immersion Suits

The immersion suits shall be so placed as to be readily accessible and their position shall be clearly indicated. The vessel's Fire Control & Life Saving Appliances Plan must be updated accordingly. The following two options may be considered for the storage of immersion suits:

Option (i) Storage: Immersion Suits to be stored on deck in a box or a centralised accessible store room within or outside of the accommodation (on the way to, or in the vicinity of the assembly stations or survival craft stations).

Quantity: If this solution is implemented, the quantity of the immersion suits to be placed onboard, is equal to the number of persons for which life-saving appliances are provided, as stated on the record of equipment of the Cargo Ship Safety Equipment Certificate, plus (if applicable) the immersion suits required by virtue of paragraphs 4 and 5.

or

Option (ii) Storage: Immersion Suits to be placed in Crew Cabins.

Quantity: If this solution is implemented, the quantity of the immersion suits to be placed onboard, is equal to the number of persons for which life-saving appliances are provided, as stated on the record of equipment of the Cargo Ship Safety Equipment Certificate; additionally, there should be at least two (2) readily available immersion suits located in the Navigation Bridge and at least two (2) located in the Engine Control Room, plus (if applicable) the immersion suits required by virtue of paragraphs 4 and 5.

7. Inspection and Testing of Immersion Suits

The monthly inspection of immersion suits required by regulation 20.7 /Ch III/ SOLAS 1974, as amended, must be carried out in accordance with the attached Guidelines approved by MSC on 28 May 2002 (MSC/Circ.1047).

A periodic testing of the immersion suits, in accordance with the attached Guidelines approved by MSC on 25 May 2004 (MSC/Circ.1114), must be carried at intervals not exceeding three years. Immersion suits which are already over three years of age must be tested by the next safety equipment survey.

The shore-based stations which have been accepted to provide services to Cyprus ships in respect of immersion suits must fulfil the criteria of my Circular No. 12/2001 dated 15 June 2001 on "IMO Resolution A. 761 (18) as amended. Liferaft servicing stations approved and certified by SOLAS Contracting Governments or Recognized Organizations (ROs)".

8. This circular supersedes my circular No. 25/2005 issued on 04 October 2005.

9. This Circular must be placed on board ships flying the Cyprus Flag.

S. S. Serghiou

Director

Department of Merchant Shipping

cc: Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Communications and Works
Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Maritime Offices of the Department of Merchant Shipping abroad
Diplomatic and Consular Missions of the Republic
Honorary Consular Officers of the Republic
Cyprus Shipping Council
Cyprus Union of Shipowners
PEO Trade Union
SEK Trade Union
Cyprus Bar Association