

SUB-COMMITTEE ON SHIP DESIGN AND  
EQUIPMENT  
56th session  
Agenda item 6

DE 56/6/2  
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**DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW FRAMEWORK OF REQUIREMENTS  
FOR LIFE-SAVING APPLIANCES**

**Outcome of MSC 89 and outstanding work on measures to prevent  
accidents with lifeboats**

**Submitted by ICS, BIMCO, IFSMA, IMCA, INTERCARGO, INTERTANKO, ITF,  
Nautical Institute and OCIMF**

**SUMMARY**

*Executive summary:* This document provides information regarding the outcome of MSC 89 and the shipping industry guideline for selecting new or replacement on-load lifeboat release hooks developed by the Industry Lifeboat Group. The attention of the Sub-Committee is additionally drawn to previous submissions regarding standardization and ergonomic considerations that may provide valuable guidance to further work on this agenda item.

*Strategic direction:* 5.1

*High-level action:* 5.1.2

*Planned output:* 5.1.2.4

*Action to be taken:* Paragraphs 6 and 7

*Related documents:* DE 51/8/7; DE 52/6/5; DE 53/3/4; DE 56/6; DE 55/7/8; MSC 89/25 and ISWG LRH/2/3

**Background**

1 In concluding its extensive consideration of measures to prevent accidents with lifeboats, MSC 89, when considering draft amendments to SOLAS chapter III, the LSA Code and associated MSC circulars, noted concerns raised by delegations and observers from industry associations that, although progress had been made by the Organization, further work is needed on matters related to the safety of lifeboat release and retrieval systems, in particular, the need for a permanent secondary safety system for the design of new systems, an appropriate vibration test, standardization of life-saving appliances and training issues. In this regard, the Committee welcomed the initiative by the industry to develop guidance to assist shipowners and operators in their selection of replacement hooks.

### **Development of industry guidance**

2 Following MSC 89, members of the Industry Lifeboat Group developed shipping industry guidance for selecting new or replacement on-load lifeboat release hooks. The guidance, which is included in the annex, is intended for use when selecting new or replacement on-load release hooks and is expected to remain in place until further consideration of the issue by IMO has been concluded.

### **Further consideration**

3 MSC 89, noting the explanation by the DE Chairman on discussions held at DE 54 and DE 55, agreed that the DE Sub-Committee should further consider matters related to the safety of lifeboat release and retrieval systems. In particular, consideration should address the need for a permanent secondary safety system for the design of new systems, an appropriate vibration test, standardization of life-saving appliances and training issues and that the above issues should be considered under its item on "Development of a new framework of requirements for life-saving appliances", based on relevant submissions, taking into account the proposals made by the Industry Lifeboat Group (ISWG LRH/2/3).

4 The co-sponsors welcome the decision of the Committee that outstanding matters of concern to the shipping industry regarding this matter will receive appropriate consideration by the DE Sub-Committee.

### **Proposal**

5 The attention of the Sub-Committee is drawn to document DE 51/8/7 and in particular to paragraph 7 of that document. The shipping industry submission proposed consideration of numerous designs, ergonomic and standardization issues with regard to lifeboat and lifeboat systems, construction and design, but many of these issues remain unresolved. Following extensive consideration the ILG developed the list of named factors as being important proposals to the Sub-Committee. The Sub-Committee is strongly urged to include the outstanding items from this list of factors to be considered under the item, "Development of a new framework of requirements for life-saving appliances".

### **Action requested of the Sub-Committee**

6 The Sub-Committee is invited to note that the ILG developed shipping industry guidance attached at annex and to consider whether the guidance would provide useful information to the Sub-Committee under this agenda item.

7 The Sub-Committee is also invited to consider the remaining issues from paragraph 7 of document DE 51/8/7 under this agenda item.

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## ANNEX

### SHIPPING INDUSTRY GUIDELINE FOR SELECTING NEW OR REPLACEMENT ON-LOAD LIFEBOAT RELEASE HOOKS

1 MSC 89 addressed the evaluation and replacement of lifeboat release and retrieval systems by:

- .1 approving an MSC circular on Guidelines for evaluation and replacement of lifeboat release and retrieval systems;
- .2 adopting amendments to SOLAS regulation III/1;
- .3 approving an MSC circular on early application of new SOLAS regulation III/1.5, in conjunction with the adoption of the amendments to SOLAS regulation III/1;
- .4 agreeing on the application date for amendments to the LSA Code, taking into account the time necessary for the development and approval of a new lifeboat release and retrieval systems, and adopted amendments to the LSA Code, together with the associated draft MSC resolution; and
- .5 adopting an MSC resolution on Amendments to the Revised recommendation on testing of life-saving appliances (resolution MSC.81(70)), as amended.

2 IMO will continue consideration of lifeboat safety and in particular the issue of on-load release hook safety. This ongoing consideration reflects in part concern raised by the shipping industry that not all effects, including the effect of vibration on on-load release hooks, have been fully considered by IMO. Shipping industry associations have consequently agreed this guidance for consideration by shipping companies and other parties when selecting new or replacement lifeboat on-load release hooks. The guidance is intended to be supportive of, and supplementary to, the measures adopted by MSC 89 and is expected to remain in place until further consideration of these issues by IMO has been completed.

3 It is advised that when selecting new or replacement on-load release hooks, designs incorporating a permanent "secondary safety system" should be considered. One example of an acceptable secondary safety system is a locking pin that can only be inserted or removed when the hook is correctly reset.

4 The design of a secondary safety system should ensure that, when used, the hook is locked closed and cannot open until the secondary system is released or unlocked.

5 It is recognized that approved, fail safe and innovative hook designs may exist or may be developed and that particular characteristics of such designs may negate the need for a secondary safety system. Such characteristics should ensure that the system cannot be released unintentionally or by the force of gravity.

6 It is further recommended that ship's masters should ensure that, when a lifeboat hook fitted with a secondary safety system is fitted, the secondary safety system is used during all drills (both launch and recovery) and specifically at all times when the lifeboat has a crew aboard, notwithstanding that particularly on tankers the remote release of secondary safety systems should be from inside the lifeboat, although it is recognized that this facility may not be available. Consequently, the master should always assess, on a case-by-case basis, whether or not a secondary safety system should be used when launching a lifeboat in an emergency.