



PANAMA MARITIME AUTHORITY
Directorate General of Merchant Marine
International Representative Office, N.Y.

Merchant Marine Circular No.144

Panama Maritime Authority

To:	Shipowners/Operators, Recognized Organizations
Subject:	Carriage of Immersion Suits carries onboard Panamanian Flagged Vessels.
Reference:	SOLAS Consolidated Edition 2004, Chapter III, Reg. 32.3, International Life-Saving Appliance (LSA) Code, MSC Resolution 152(78)

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this Merchant Marine Circular is to remind all parties concerned with Panamanian flag ships of the full implementation of the carriage of Immersion Suits on board Panamanian flag ships.

2.0 APPLICATION

- 2.1 This circular applies to all cargo ships.

3.0 REQUIREMENTS

- 3.1 The Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) of the International Maritime Organization, adopted on May 20, 2004, through Resolution MSC. 152 (78) amendments to the International Convention for the Safety of the life at Sea (SOLAS), 74, as amended. These amendments will enter into force on July 1, 2006.
- 3.2 New cargo ships constructed after 1 July 2006 and existing cargo ships no later than the first safety equipment survey on or after 1 July 2006 shall carry immersion suits for every person onboard the ship subject to these regulations and based in the Safety Equipment Certificate (Form E). Suitable immersion Suits should also be provided for children where carried.
- 3.3 Any ship subject to this regulation will also provide additional immersion suits so that individuals who will be working some distance from the place where a crewman's immersion suit is stored. These places will include, but not limited to the Navigation Bridge, Engine Room, and any other places onboard the ship that in accordance with the type of ship, should be considered as a permanent working place. On the above mentioned places, the ship must carry Two (2) Immersion Suits because in an emergency it is unreasonable to expect a crewman could acquire the assigned immersion suit.

- 3.4 Immersion suits and thermal protective aids are to be assigned by the Master. It is recommended that they should be kept in the crew cabins along with life jackets.
- 3.5 The three (3) immersion suits per lifeboat required by SOLAS, Regulation III/32.3.2 for cargo ships and Regulation III/22.4.1 for passenger vessels are intended for use by the designated and/or certified persons in charge of the lifeboat. They may be kept in the cabins of the assigned personnel. In addition, all persons in the crew of a rescue boat are to be provided with immersion suits, if different from the persons in charge of the lifeboat noted above.
- 3.6 For cargo vessels less than 85 meters in length other than oil tankers, chemical tankers and gas carriers operating above 32° North and 32° South latitudes, where only life rafts are carried in accordance with SOLAS, Chapter III, Regulation 31.1.3, all persons are to be provided with immersion suits.
- 3.7 A ship other than bulk carrier as defined in regulation 1/ IX of SOLAS 1974, as amended, which is constantly engaged on voyages in Warm Climates, between Latitude 32 ° degrees North and 32 ° degrees South), may be exempted from the said requirements.
- 3.8 All immersion Suits must comply with the requirements of Reg. 2.3 of the Life Saving Appliances Code published by IMO.
- 3.9 Ship shall continue to carry the number of Lifejackets Required by Reg. 7.2/III of SOLAS 74, as amended, when the immersion suits are classified as Lifejacket.
- 3.10 The Monthly inspection and the periodic testing of the Immersion Suit must be carried out in accordance with the guidelines approved by the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

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