



## MARITIME AUTHORITY OF JAMAICA

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Reference

### MAY 2004 AMENDMENTS TO SOLAS

#### **Persons in distress at sea**

Amendments to chapter V (Safety of Navigation) - to add a definition of search and rescue services; to set an obligation to provide assistance, regardless of nationality or status of persons in distress, and mandate co-ordination and co-operation between States to assist the ship's master in delivering persons rescued at sea to a place of safety; and to add a new regulation on master's discretion.

#### **Accidents with lifeboats**

Amendments to SOLAS chapter III (Life-saving appliances and arrangements) which are intended to help prevent accidents with lifeboats during drills. The amendments, which are expected to enter into force on 1 July 2006, stem from work by the Sub-Committee on Ship Design and Equipment (DE) intended to address the unacceptably high number of accidents with lifeboats that have been occurring over recent years. Crew have been injured, sometimes fatally, while participating in lifeboat drills and/or inspections.

The amendments to Regulation 19 (Emergency training and drills) and Regulation 20 (Operational readiness, maintenance and inspections) concern the conditions in which lifeboat emergency training and drills should be conducted and introduce changes to the operational tests to be conducted during the weekly and monthly inspections, so as not to require the assigned crew to be on board in all cases.

#### **Carriage of immersion suits**

Amendments to SOLAS chapter III Regulation 32 - Personal life-saving appliances to make changes to the number of immersion suits to be carried on all cargo ships. The amendments introduce carriage requirements for one immersion suit per person on board all cargo ships, including bulk carriers. At present, the regulation requires carriage of at least three immersion suits for each lifeboat on a cargo ship, as well as thermal protective aids for persons not provided with immersion suits.

With the adoption of the proposed amendments, immersion suits will become, as lifejackets, a personal life-saving appliance for each person on board thus offering better thermal protection and improved chance of survival and rescue. The MSC also adopted consequential amendments to the 1988 SOLAS Protocol relating to the records of equipment.

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