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MSC/Circ.1110

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MATTERS RELATED TO SOLAS REGULATIONS XI-2/6 AND XI-2/7

1 The Maritime Safety Committee, at its seventy-eighth session (12 to 21 May 2004), considered various matters relating to ship security alerts and response to distress/security double alerts and adopted, with respect to the provisions of SOLAS regulations XI-2/6 and XI-2/7, which will enter into force on 1 July 2004, the guidance set out in the attached annex.

2 Member Governments and international organizations are invited to bring this circular to the attention of their maritime rescue co-ordination centres (MRCCs), shipowners, ship operators, companies, masters and ships' personnel and all parties concerned responsible for the implementation of special measures to enhance maritime security.

ANNEX**MATTERS RELATED TO SOLAS REGULATIONS XI-2/6 AND XI-2/7****Ship Security Alerts**

1 The Committee noted that SOLAS regulation XI-2/6.6 requires that an Administration receiving notification of a ship security alert shall notify the States in the vicinity of which the ship is presently operating. The Committee confirmed that the appropriate recipient for such information is the national point of contact as required by SOLAS regulation XI-2/7.2, as notified to, and promulgated by, the Organization in accordance with SOLAS regulation XI-2/13.1.5. Where the State(s) in the vicinity of the ship are non-Contracting parties to SOLAS, such information should be passed via normal diplomatic channels in the most expedient manner.

2 The Committee also noted that although the intended recipient of a security alert was a competent authority designated by the Administration which may be a maritime rescue co-ordination centre (MRCC), it was possible that covert security alerts could be received by non-designated MRCCs. Guidance on the action to be taken by MRCCs in such instances is detailed in MSC/Circ.1073 on Directives for maritime rescue co-ordination centres on acts of violence against ships.

Response to Distress/Security Double Alerts

3 The Committee, recognizing the potential consequences of failure to provide a prompt and adequate response to the distress alert element of a “distress/security double alert” situation and, pending further consideration of the issue, recommended that such cases would require an immediate response to the situation arising from the distress alert. However, those responding to the distress alert should be instructed, through the MRCC, to proceed with due care and caution bearing in mind that the security of the ship may have been compromised or be under threat.
