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MSC/Circ.1115  
25 May 2004

## **PREVENTION OF ACCIDENTS IN HIGH FREE-FALL LAUNCHING OF LIFEBOATS**

1 The Maritime Safety Committee, at its seventy-eighth session (12 to 21 May 2004), considered several reports of injuries sustained by seafarers during free-fall launches of free-fall lifeboats from heights greater than 20 metres.

2 The Committee endorsed the proposal of the Sub-Committee on Ship Design and Equipment to add a relevant item to its short-term work plan for measures to prevent accidents with lifeboats, to consider the need for improvements to the requirements for design and configuration of free-fall lifeboat seating and launch arrangements to protect the occupants from harmful acceleration forces, particularly with regard to free-fall launch heights greater than 20 metres.

3 The Committee, recognizing the ongoing work of the Sub-Committee on Ship Design and Equipment to address this issue, agreed that in enforcing the provisions of SOLAS regulation III/19.3.3.4 with regard to free-fall lifeboats being launched from heights greater than 20 metres, Administrations may accept launching by falls in lieu of free-fall launching, provided that a simulated free-fall launch is conducted at least every six months.

4 Member Governments are invited to bring this circular to the attention of their Administrations and all parties concerned.

5 This circular remains in effect for two years from the date of this circular unless revoked earlier.

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