



Risk Assessment Solutions

## **“Don’t Cure, Prevent”**

### **Circular 01/04/2015**

**Subject: “Lifeboats - not been maneuvered for 3 months” - Important Safety & PSC Issue!**

**Case:** Recently, it has been reported that a cargo vessel faced difficulties in an Australian Port (Melbourne) when the Port State Control Officers boarded the vessel for a detailed PSC inspection. More specifically, the PSC Officers amongst others noticed that the free - fall lifeboat has not been maneuvered in water for a period of more than 3 months. As a result, the following deficiency was imposed:

**Act. Code 15: “Lifeboats have not been maneuvered for 3 months”**

In connection to the above, and in order to assist our clients to avoid similar complications, we kindly provide herewith the relevant **SOLAS** requirements pursuant to the above case.

**SOLAS Chapter III, Part B, Regulation 19.3.3.4 reads:**

*“In the case of a lifeboat arranged for free-fall launching, at least **once every three months** during an abandon ship drill the crew shall board the lifeboat, properly secure themselves in their seats and commence the launch procedure up to but not including the actual release of the lifeboat (i.e., the release hook shall not be released). The lifeboat shall then either be free-fall launched with only the required operating crew on board, or lowered into the water by means of the secondary means of launching without the operating crew on board, and then maneuvered in the water by the operating crew. At intervals of not more than six months, the lifeboat shall either be launched by free-fall with only the operating crew on board, or simulated launching shall be carried out in accordance with the guidelines developed by the Organization”.*

Referring to the above mentioned regulation and in order to assist further, **“Prevention at Sea”** highlights the below listed items for securing the proper operation of lifeboats:

- Crew Members should be aware of lifeboats routine maintenance requirements and frequently check their equipment and documentation so as to ensure that all components of the lifeboats and launching appliances are maintained in good condition and operational at all times.
- Confirmation whether the relevant SMS Procedures satisfy the manufacturer’s instructions.
- Abandon ship drills shall be conducted in accordance with SOLAS and the Administration requirements, so that all seafarers who enter the lifeboat to be adequately trained to embark the lifeboat, take their seats in a correct way, use the safety belts and finally to be instructed on how to act during launching into the sea.



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- Operational testing of free - fall lifeboats shall be performed either by free - fall launch or by a simulated launch in accordance with the *Appendix in MSC.1/Circ.1206/Rev.1*, where it is clearly stated what steps should be followed.
- The simulated launching should be carried out under the supervision of a responsible and experienced in such procedures Officer for the prevention of any unpleasant incident during the simulation procedure.
- It is also important to point out that although, the regulation requires the lifeboat to be maneuvered into the water by its assigned operating crew, it does not require the assigned operating crew to be onboard when the lifeboat is launched (*IMO MSC.1/Circ.1326*).

Our company is offering a wide range of 'deficiencies', case studies, clarification on the PSC deficiencies through our PSC Seminar which is delivered on regular intervals in our office or in-house at client's request.

To assist further, we offer our clients the service of assessing onboard or through "Distance Assessment" if a vessel is in conformance with the MLC 2006 or PSC requirements or conducting inspections equivalent to PSC/Flag/Rightship inspections to detect and prevent unpleasant occurrences!

We remain at your disposal for more details,

**Prevention at Sea**