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MSC.1/Circ.1413
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**BASIC SAFETY GUIDANCE FOR YACHT RACES OR
OCEANIC VOYAGES BY NON-REGULATED CRAFT**

- 1 The Maritime Safety Committee, at its ninetieth session (16 to 25 May 2012), approved the annexed Basic safety guidance for yacht races or oceanic voyages by non-regulated craft.
- 2 The purpose of this circular is to reduce those risks that could lead to loss of life or severe physical injuries to both crew and would-be rescuers, and to reduce the need for extended and expensive search and rescue (SAR) operations.
- 3 Member Governments are invited to bring the information to the attention of all parties concerned for consideration and action, as appropriate.
- 4 This circular supersedes MSC/Circ.1174 and MSC.1/Circ.1366.

ANNEX

BASIC SAFETY GUIDANCE FOR YACHT RACES OR OCEANIC VOYAGES BY NON-REGULATED CRAFT

GENERAL

1 The purpose of this circular is to provide basic safety guidance for yacht races or oceanic voyages by non-regulated craft to reduce those risks that could lead to loss of life or severe physical injuries to both crew and would-be rescuers, and to reduce the need for extended and expensive search and rescue (SAR) operations.

2 Detailed guidance can be obtained from:

- .1 ISAF Offshore Special Regulations: www.sailing.org/specialregs; and
- .2 International Ocean Rowing Society: www.oceanrowing.com/index.htm.

3 Major yacht races or oceanic voyages by non-regulated craft present, at times, a significant coordination issue for SAR service providers in relation to distress and emergency incidents. Timely and effective responses are aided by the gathering and preparation of relevant information prior to the race or voyage.

4 The aim of this circular is to provide a set of guidelines, for skippers and crew on board, yacht race organizers and persons ashore in contact with a non-regulated craft, to facilitate timely, accurate and responsive preparation for a yacht race or oceanic voyages by non-regulated craft.

5 The focus of these guidelines is on proper preparation on board, and the collection and storing of relevant data ashore, aiming, in case of an incident, to establish robust lines of communication between the Rescue Co-ordination Centre (RCC) in charge of the SAR operation and the race organizers or a responsible person ashore in contact with a non-regulated craft. The collection and storing of data, including information to support medical assistance at sea, should be the responsibility of the race organizers or the responsible person ashore.

6 In the event of an incident the most suitable RCC should be alerted as an initial point of contact. This RCC will contact and liaise with other RCCs as necessary. This allows for easy access to the data held by the race organizer or the responsible person ashore.

GUIDANCE FOR PREPARATION ON BOARD

The craft

7 The craft should be of suitable construction for the intended voyage, possess adequate buoyancy and stability and carry appropriate high-visibility markings.

Provisions and safety equipment

- 8 The following safety equipment should be provided:
- .1 appropriate liferaft(s);
 - .2 sufficient lifejacket(s) and, if appropriate, immersion suits for all crew members;
 - .3 electronic positioning system with all necessary charts for the voyage;
 - .4 distress signals and other approved signalling devices;
 - .5 radar reflector;
 - .6 sufficient food, water and, if required, fuel for the voyage;
 - .7 adequate medical equipment; and
 - .8 suitable clothing with high-visibility markings.
- 9 The crew should be so equipped as to enable them to survive for five days before rescue.

Radiocommunications

10 The craft should be equipped with two means of distress alerting one of which is capable of two-way communications suitable to the area of operations. One system to be carried should be a 406 MHz beacon, properly encoded and registered. Hand-held radios capable of operating on maritime and, if appropriate, aeronautical short-range frequencies should also be carried.

Voyage planning

11 The skipper should prepare a voyage plan and leave that plan with the responsible person ashore together with details of the craft. The person in charge of the craft should submit a voyage plan to the Maritime Administration at the port of departure, if required by that Maritime Administration.

Crew training

- 12 All members of the crew should have satisfactorily completed appropriate:
- .1 training for the intended voyage, e.g. navigation and communications with appropriate certification where necessary;
 - .2 survival course(s); and
 - .3 first aid course(s).

GUIDANCE FOR PREPARATION ASHORE

Information to be provided to the most suitable RCC

13 Race organizers or a responsible person ashore in contact with a non-regulated craft should provide the following information to the most suitable RCC:

- .1 Point of contact
 - 24-hour telephone/facsimile/e-mail/website details for:
 - .1 race operations officer;
 - .2 race media officer; or
 - .3 responsible person in contact with the non-regulated craft.
- .2 Vessel description and crew details
 - .1 vessel description with details and electronic pictures (updated);
 - .2 communications equipment carried including specific contact details of the yacht;
 - .3 number of people on board, their names and nationality, and contact details for next of kin; and
 - .4 capability of crew members.
- .3 Information about the voyage
 - .1 copy of the race rules, if appropriate, in particular the emergency procedure section;
 - .2 route and intended schedule, including SAR regions to be entered; and
 - .3 agreed means of routine contact with the vessel(s).

Note: The "most suitable" RCC will be determined by circumstances. It may be the RCC local to the race organizers or the responsible person ashore; or the RCC in whose SAR region the race or voyage will take place; or – if several SAR regions will be crossed – one or more of the relevant RCCs. RCCs may or may not require information prior to any accident. The important point is that all parties – the race organizers or responsible person ashore, and the RCCs – should know where the necessary information is stored and how to access it in the event of an emergency.

Information to be available for medical assistance

14 The race organizer or the person in contact with a non-regulated craft should have available on demand the following information:

- .1 for each vessel:
 - .1 list of medicines and medical equipment carried;

- .2 list of medical competence on board; and
 - .3 details of any Telemedical Assistance Service (TMAS) or private medical service arranged by the vessel.
- .2 for each crew member:
- .1 name and contact details of physician who certified the person fit for the race or voyage;
 - .2 name and contact details of the crew member's home physician;
 - .3 method for gaining quick access to medical records if necessary; and
 - .4 details of first aid or other medical training received.

Distress Alerting

On board, giving the alert

15 In the event of a distress situation, two-way communications should be established indicating the nature of distress and position given. A 406 MHz beacon should be activated and left switched on until contact has been established with the SAR authorities by other means and the SAR authorities have given their approval for the beacon to be switched off.

On shore, receiving the alert

16 Race organizers or a responsible person ashore in contact with a non-regulated craft becoming aware of a distress situation, or concerned that such a situation may exist, should contact the appropriate RCC. The RCC contacted will pass the information to the RCC responsible for the SAR region in which the incident has occurred as necessary, and will ensure that contact is established between the coordinating RCC and the race organizers or responsible person to enable the efficient exchange of information.

Other Incidents

17 The previous section relates to a distress situation. However other incidents may arise which require external information and/or assistance, for example:

- .1 craft damage;
- .2 medical problems; and
- .3 loss of communications.

18 In all non-distress cases participants should contact race organizers or the responsible person ashore if they can and advise them of the situation. The race organizers or the responsible person ashore should liaise with the appropriate RCC as necessary to develop and implement a response plan.