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Shipboard Equipment and Service Provider Approvals

1.0 Introduction

This Technical Circular supersedes Technical Circular 1, Rev.6. It addresses:

- 1.1 shipboard equipment and systems that require approval by the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) Administrator (the “Administrator”);
- 1.2 service provider approvals; and
- 1.3 recognized independent testing laboratories & service providers.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 International Maritime Organization (IMO) conventions often require that shipboard equipment be “to the satisfaction of the Administration”, or in compliance with a specified IMO standard, specification, or guideline. Conventions that fall in this category include: SOLAS, MARPOL, BWM, COLREGs, LL Convention,¹ and their associated Codes.
- 2.2 Unless instructed otherwise, the Administrator recognizes International Association of Classification Societies (IACS) Procedural Requirements (PRs), Unified Requirements (URs), and Unified Interpretations (UIs).
- 2.3 In many instances, equipment that is accepted by the classification society as part of the vessel classification process will automatically satisfy the convention and code requirements. However, some lifesaving, fire detecting/extinguishing, navigation, pollution prevention, radio, safety equipment, and ballast water management equipment and systems may fall outside this category in that it is not always evaluated or accepted as part of the vessel classification process. As such, some of this equipment has traditionally been approved by Administrations and the policies and procedures below are intended to address these approvals.

1. International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) 1974, International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL), International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments, 2004 (BWM Convention), Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, 1972 (COLREGs), and International Convention on Load Lines, 1966 (LL).

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3.0 Equipment Approvals

3.1 Recognized Organization (RO) Authorizations

- .1 The Administrator has authorized its ROs to approve equipment to applicable IMO instruments on behalf of the RMI.

3.2 Approvals by Another State

- .1 The Administrator will accept equipment approvals granted by another State that is a Party to the relevant convention, or an RMI RO acting on behalf of that Party.
- .2 On a case-by-case basis, the Administrator may accept equipment approvals granted by another State that is not a Party to the applicable statutory convention.
3. The Administrator will accept equipment approved under European Union Marine Equipment Directive (MED) [2014/90/EU](#), as amended.

3.3 Existing Equipment

Existing equipment, which was manufactured, tested, installed, and accepted by the Administrator under previous SOLAS requirements, may continue to be used provided it remains in serviceable condition.

3.4 Lifesaving Appliances and Equipment

Newly installed lifesaving equipment must comply with the relevant SOLAS and International Life-Saving Appliance (LSA) Code requirements and the relevant IMO guidelines. IMO Resolution [MSC.81\(70\)](#)², *Revised Recommendation on Testing of Life-saving Appliances* must be applied when approving life-saving appliances.

3.5 Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons

- .1 The equipment approval procedures for Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons (EPIRBs) and satellite terminals differ from those in above that:
 - a. EPIRBs must be COSPAS-SARSAT approved.

2. As amended by IMO Resolutions [MSC.200\(80\)](#), [MSC.226\(82\)](#), [MSC.274\(85\)](#), [MSC.295\(87\)](#), [MSC.321\(89\)](#), [MSC.323\(89\)](#), [MSC.378\(93\)](#), [MSC.427\(98\)](#), [MSC.472\(101\)](#) and [MSC.488\(103\)](#).

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b. Satellite terminals must have approval from a recognized mobile satellite service provider (e.g.: INMARSAT, IRIDIUM, or BDMSS³).

.2 The Administrator will accept equipment endorsements from these organizations.

3.6 Type Approval Certificates

.1 The type approval certification scheme is generally accepted by flag States as confirmation that equipment conforms to recognized industry quality standards, international conventions, or classification society rules.

.2 The expiry of the Type Approval Certificate has no influence on the operational validity of a product accepted and installed onboard a ship prior to such expiry.

.3 A product manufactured during the validity period of the relevant Type Approval Certificate need not be renewed or replaced due to expiration of such Type Approval Certificate.

.4 See IMO Circular [MSC.1/Circ.1221](#), *Validity of Type Approval Certification for Marine Products*, issued 11 December 2006.

4.0 Service Provider Approvals - SOLAS III/20 and III/36

4.1 A service provider, or manufacturer acting as a service provider, must be authorized by the Administrator according to IMO Resolution [MSC.402\(96\)](#) before providing maintenance, examination, testing, overhaul or repair of:

.1 lifeboats (including free-fall lifeboats);

.2 rescue boats;

.3 fast rescue boats;

.4 launching appliances; and

.5 on-load and off-load release gear for lifeboats (including primary and secondary means of launching appliance for free-fall lifeboats), rescue boats and davit-launched life rafts.

4.2 Authorized service provider listings are maintained by the Administrator's ROs who have been delegated the authority to ensure that the service providers meet the

3. IMO has recognized the BeiDou Message Service System (BDMSS) for regional coverage for the area set out in IMO Resolution [MSC.529\(106\)](#).

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IMO Resolution [MSC.402\(96\)](#) requirements. These requirements must be met whether the entity conducting the service is a service provider, or a manufacturer acting as a service provider⁴.

- 4.3 Where a manufacturer is no longer in business or no longer provides technical support, the Administrator may authorize service providers for the equipment based on prior authorization for the equipment and/or long-term experience and demonstrated expertise as an authorized service provider.

5.0 Servicing Station Approvals - SOLAS III/20.8

- 5.1 SOLAS requires the following to be serviced at approved servicing facilities and using properly trained personnel:

- .1 inflatable life rafts,
- .2 inflatable lifejackets,
- .3 marine evacuation systems, and
- .4 inflated rescue boats

- 5.2 The Administrator does not approve service providers for other equipment unless the approval is mandated by convention requirements.

- 5.3 The Administrator endorses IMO Assembly Resolution [A.761\(18\)](#), *Recommendation on Conditions for the Approval of Servicing Stations for Inflatable Liferafts*, as amended,⁵ and requires its application as appropriate.

- 5.4 There are presently no servicing facilities for this equipment in the RMI. If facilities in the RMI are established in the future, they must be certified according to IACS [UR Z17](#) and IMO Assembly Resolution [A.716\(18\)](#), as amended.

- 5.5 In countries other than the RMI, the Administrator may accept servicing facility approvals granted by another State that is a Party to the applicable Statutory Convention, or an RO on behalf of the Administrator or other Party to the applicable Statutory Convention, provided that the approvals comply fully with Convention requirements. These approvals must also comply with IMO Resolution [A.761\(18\)](#), as amended by IMO Resolution [MSC.55\(66\)](#), and [MSC.388\(94\)](#).⁶

4. This means that an original equipment manufacturer (OEM) does not need to be authorized to service its own equipment. An OEM does need to be authorized when it is servicing equipment that is not its own and is considered a service provider in such cases.

5. As amended by IMO Resolution [MSC.55\(66\)](#) and IMO Resolution [MSC.388\(94\)](#).

6. This has become necessary because certain suppliers have not developed networks of service stations to support their products, something that owners should be taking into consideration in the selection of closely regulated items such as these.

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- 5.6 The Administrator may also consider accepting, on a case-by-case basis, approvals performed in accordance with IACS [UR Z17](#) and IMO Assembly Resolution [A.761\(18\)](#), as amended.
- 5.7 The Administrator does not require that service providers comply with IACS [UR Z17](#), except as provided in §5.3, above. It is recognized that this standard is often employed for specialized functions, such as the servicing and testing of radio equipment. The Administrator has no objection to its application when deemed appropriate by the attending surveyor.
- 5.8 Service providers must have a documented and certified quality management system (QMS) which incorporates the items listed in §7.1.5 of IMO Resolution [MSC.402\(96\)](#). A QMS certified in accordance with the most current version of the ISO 9000 series is an acceptable means of fulfilling this requirement but is not mandatory. Where a QMS complies with other standards, certification must be obtained by the service provider through approval by an Administrator RO.

6.0 Recognized Independent Testing Laboratories

- 6.1 International instruments to which the RMI is signatory may require that certain materials, equipment, or devices are manufactured, tested, marked, and installed according to particular international standards and certified by an independent testing laboratory recognized by the Administrator.
- 6.2 The Administrator does not maintain a specific list of acceptable independent testing laboratories. However, to be recognized by the Administrator an independent laboratory must:
- .1 be engaged, as a regular part of its business, in performing inspections and tests that are the same as, or largely similar to, the inspections and tests required in the applicable standard;
 - .2 possess, or have access to, the apparatus, facilities, personnel, and calibrated instruments that are necessary to inspect and test the equipment or material under the applicable standard;
 - .3 not be owned or controlled by:
 - a. the manufacturer of the equipment or material to be inspected or tested under the applicable standard or any manufacturer of similar equipment or material;
 - b. a vendor of the equipment or material to be inspected or tested under the applicable standard or a vendor of similar equipment or material; or
 - c. a supplier of materials to the manufacturer;

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- .4 not advertise or promote the manufacturer's equipment or material that the laboratory inspects and tests under the applicable standard; and
- .5 possess International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 17025 certification from an accreditation body which is a full member of the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC), or an accreditation body recognized by the National Cooperation for Laboratory Accreditation (NACLA).
