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TECHNICAL CIRCULAR

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Means of Ship Embarkation/Disembarkation and Pilot Transfer Arrangements

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) Regulation II-1/3-9, which entered into force on 01 January 2010, established construction, installation, maintenance, and inspection/survey requirements for the means of embarkation and disembarkation on ships. This regulation is supplemented by International Maritime Organization (IMO) Circular [MSC.1/Circ.1331](#), *Guidelines for Construction, Installation, Maintenance and Inspection/Survey of Means of Embarkation and Disembarkation*. Recognized Organizations (ROs) shall inspect the means of embarkation/disembarkation in accordance with the aforementioned provisions, taking into account any restrictions related to safe operation and loading.
- 1.2 SOLAS Regulation V/23 governs pilot transfer arrangements. This regulation has been augmented by IMO Assembly Resolution [A.1045\(27\)](#) *Pilot Transfer Arrangements*, as amended by IMO Assembly Resolution [A.1108\(29\)](#), both of which provide recommendations on pilot ladder (including accommodation ladders used in conjunction with pilot ladders) use, and maintenance. Furthermore, a unified interpretation to be used as guidance when applying the relevant provision of SOLAS Regulation V/23.3.3 has been agreed by IMO and issued in IMO Circular [MSC.1/Circ.1495/Rev.1](#), *Unified Interpretation of SOLAS Regulation V/23.3.3*. All ships with the occasion to use the services of a pilot shall be inspected by ROs in accordance with these provisions.
- 1.3 This IMO Circular complements Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) Marine Notice [7-043-1](#), *Means of Ship Embarkation/Disembarkation*, and RMI Marine Notice [7-041-3](#), *Pilot Transfer Arrangements*.

2.0 Inspections

- 2.1 Inspections and tests to confirm proper construction, installation, operation, and maintenance of equipment shall be conducted in accordance with SOLAS Regulations II-1/3-9 and V/23, IMO Assembly Resolution A.1045(27) (as amended), IMO Circulars MSC.1/Circ.1495 and MSC.1/Circ.1331, and any other applicable standards (e.g., International Organization for Standardization (ISO) Standards), regulations, and guidelines. This includes:

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- .1 examination of pilot transfer arrangements, the accommodation ladder, gangway, winch, fittings and davits, and means of access to deck shall occur during the respective surveys required by SOLAS Regulations I/6, I/7, and I/8; and
 - .2 operational tests with the specified maximum operational loads shall be carried out on the accommodation ladder, gangway, and winch at every five (5)-year renewal survey. The load used for the tests shall be determined in consultation with the ship owner or ship operator, but at all times must be in conformance with the provisions of IMO Circular [MSC.1/Circ.1331](#), §5.3, which specifies allowable alternatives for determining load. The load used for the test shall be documented accordingly for future surveys.
- 2.2 To determine compliance with the requirements for the means of embarkation and disembarkation for New Ships, an RO may, as appropriate:
- .1 require drawings submittal and approval of the means of embarkation and disembarkation to check conformity with IMO Circular MSC.1/Circ.1331. Drawings relevant to the connections with the hull structures also may be required to be submitted and approved;
 - .2 verify that the means of embarkation and the relevant winches (or lifting system) are built and tested according to the relevant ISO Standards;
 - .3 verify the installation on board for compliance with the approved drawings; or
 - .4 require and witness load tests on board in order to test the connections with the hull structures.

3.0 Equivalency

- 3.1 The means of embarkation and disembarkation shall be constructed and installed on New Ships (and Existing Ships with such means replaced) based on and in accordance with the provisions of IMO Circular MSC.1/Circ.1331. Notwithstanding, an RO in consultation with the RMI Maritime Administrator (the “Administrator”) may, on a case-by-case basis, determine that compliance with a particular provision of IMO Circular MSC.1/Circ.1331 is unreasonable or impractical. Such circumstances may include where a ship:
- .1 has small freeboards and is provided with boarding ramps; or
 - .2 is engaged in voyages between designated ports where appropriate shore accommodation/embarkation ladders (platforms) are provided.
- 3.2 Where means of embarkation and disembarkation other than those specifically covered by IMO Circular MSC.1/Circ.1331 are fitted, an equivalent level of safety must be provided.
