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GUIDELINES ON ANNUAL TESTING OF 406 MHZ SATELLITE EPIRBs

- 1 The Maritime Safety Committee, at its seventy-fifth session (15 to 24 May 2002), approved the annexed Guidelines on annual testing of 406 MHz satellite EPIRBs, as required by new SOLAS regulation IV/15.9, which enters into force on 1 July 2002.
- 2 Member Governments are invited to bring these Guidelines to the attention of shipping companies, shipowners, ship operators, equipment manufacturers, classification societies, shipmasters and all parties concerned.
- 3 This circular supersedes MSC/Circ.882.

ANNEX

GUIDELINES ON ANNUAL TESTING OF 406 MHz SATELLITE EPIRBs

- 1 The annual testing of 406 MHz satellite EPIRBs is required by new SOLAS regulation IV/15.9 entering into force on 1 July 2002.
- 2 The testing should be carried out using suitable test equipment capable of performing all the relevant measurements required in these guidelines. All checks of electrical parameters should be performed in the self-test mode, if possible.
- 3 The examination of the installed 406 MHz satellite EPIRB should include:
 - .1 checking position and mounting for float-free operation;
 - .2 verifying the presence of a firmly attached lanyard in good condition; the lanyard should be neatly stowed, and must not be tied to the vessel or the mounting bracket;
 - .3 carrying out visual inspection for defects;
 - .4 carrying out the self-test routine;
 - .5 checking that the EPIRB identification (15 Hex ID and other required information) is clearly marked on the outside of the equipment;
 - .6 decoding the EPIRB 15 Hexadecimal Identification Digits (15 Hex ID) and other information from the transmitted signal, checking that the decoded information (15 Hex ID or MMSI/callsign data, as required by the Administration) is identical to the identification marked on the beacon;
 - .7 checking registration through documentation or through the point of contact associated with that country code;
 - .8 checking the battery expiry date;
 - .9 checking the hydrostatic release and its expiry date, as appropriate;
 - .10 checking the emission in the 406 MHz band using the self-test mode or an appropriate device to avoid transmission of a distress call to the satellites;
 - .11 if possible, checking emission on the 121.5 MHz frequency using the self-test mode or an appropriate device to avoid activating the satellite system;
 - .12 checking that the EPIRB has been maintained by an approved shore-based maintenance provider at intervals required by the Administration;
 - .13 after the test, remounting the EPIRB in its bracket, checking that no transmission has been started; and
 - .14 verifying the presence of beacon operating instructions.