



PERIODIC TESTING OF IMMERSION SUIT AND ANTI-EXPOSURE SUIT SEAMS AND CLOSURES (MSC/Circ.1114)

NO. 12 of 2009

03-03-2009

Applicable to: Shipowners, masters and officers of Singapore ships

This circular is to inform shipowners, masters and officers of Singapore ships of the need for the periodic testing of immersion suit and anti-exposure suit seams and closures in accordance with the guidelines set out in MSC/Circ.1114 dated 25 May 2004.

PERIODIC TESTING OF IMMERSION SUIT AND ANTI-EXPOSURE SUIT SEAMS AND CLOSURES (MSC/Circ.1114)

Research performed by several maritime Administrations has demonstrated that the seams and closures of immersion suits and anti-exposure suits experience deterioration over time. The rate and severity of deterioration may vary widely, depending upon the specific components and procedures employed in the manufacture of the suit and the conditions under which the suit is stored. However, even under ideal conditions, the materials and adhesives used have a finite service life and will inevitably experience a reduction in strength and/or loss of watertightness with age.

2. Monthly inspection of immersion suits and anti-exposure suits carried out in accordance with SOLAS regulation III/20.7 (see Shipping Circular MC No. 16 of 2002 dated 4 September 2002) may not be adequate to detect deterioration of seams and closures of the suits due to adhesive ageing and do not adequately address deterioration of seams and closures (zippers, etc.) which may not be readily apparent by visual inspection. Such deterioration can be detected by pressurization of the suit with air, and testing of the seams and closures for leaks with a soapy water solution.

3. To ensure the maintenance of adequate strength and watertightness of seams and closures of immersion suits and anti-exposure suits with age, each suit should be subjected to an air pressure test at intervals not exceeding three years, or more frequently for suits over ten years of age in accordance with the guidelines set out in IMO Circular MSC/Circ.1114 dated 25 May 2004 as part of the maintenance required to be carried out by SOLAS Reg III/20.3.1. A copy of the circular can be found in our website under "Circulars & Notices > Shipping Notices" at: http://www.mpa.gov.sg/sites/circulars_and_notices/pdfs/shipping_circulars/circ1114.pdf

4. Notwithstanding that paragraph 4 of MSC/Circ.1114 recommends that the air pressure test be performed at a suitable shore-based facility, periodic testing of immersion suits and anti-exposure suits may be carried out by shipboard personnel who are deemed to have the necessary skills, knowledge and competence to carry out the test in accordance with MSC/Circ.1114 and with instructions provided by the manufacturer and that there are available on board suitable equipment necessary to carry out the test.

5. The "Company" as defined in paragraph 1.1.2 of the ISM Code may assess and decide on the shipboard personnel deemed to have the necessary skills, knowledge and competence to carry out the test in accordance with MSC/Circ.1114.

6. Any queries relating to this circular should be directed to Mr. Tan Leong Beng at Tel No. 6375 6207.

KHONG SHEN PING
DIRECTOR OF MARINE
MARITIME AND PORT AUTHORITY OF SINGAPORE