
Lifejackets carried on Passenger Ships

Guidance to Owners and Operators of Passenger Ships of Classes I, II and II(A), Masters, Officers, Ratings and Shipbuilders.

This Note supersedes Merchant Shipping Notice No. M.1315

Summary

This Note advises all Owners and Operators of Passenger Ships of Classes I, II and II(A), Masters, Officers, Ratings and Shipbuilders of the correct method for stowage of lifejackets.

1. The statutory requirements for the stowage of lifejackets on passenger ships of Classes I, II and II(A) are contained in the Merchant Shipping (Life-Saving Appliances for Ships Other than Ships of Classes III to VI(A)) Regulations 1999. This Note recommends how these statutory requirements might be implemented.

Stowage

2. On Class I ships the recommended stowage position for lifejackets for both passengers and crew is in their respective cabins. Arrangements should always be made to ensure that child lifejackets are provided in cabins where small children are berthed. The additional 5 per cent lifejackets required to be provided on such ships should be stowed in lockers on deck preferably at the embarkation stations. Additional lifejackets for the use of the crew should be stowed on the bridge, in the engine room control room and in any other working spaces where those on duty in these spaces would be unable to return to their cabins to collect their lifejackets in the event of an emergency.

3. On Class II and II(A) passenger ships with little or no passenger cabin accommodation, lifejackets for passengers should be stowed in or immediately adjacent to the assembly stations.

4. On Class II and II(A) passenger ships engaged on day and night sailings and with significant passenger cabin accommodation it is recommended that sufficient lifejackets be provided at the assembly stations for all the passengers and, in addition, sufficient lifejackets in the cabins for all the passengers for whom there is cabin accommodation. Alternatively, lifejackets should be provided at the assembly stations only.

5. The additional 5 per cent lifejackets required to be provided on such ships should be stowed in lockers on deck preferably at the embarkation stations. Lifejackets for the crew should be stowed in cabins and additional lifejackets should be stowed on the bridge, engine room control room and in any working spaces where those on duty in these spaces would be unable to return to their cabins to collect their lifejackets in the event of an emergency.

Lifejacket lockers

6. On passenger ships of Classes II and II(A) lifejackets which are stowed in or adjacent to assembly stations should be so stowed that for each assembly station there is at least one locker on each side of the ship. In a large assembly station there should be at least two lockers at each

end of the assembly station. This disposition of lockers ensures that except in the most unusual circumstances there should always be some of the lockers accessible at each assembly station. Dividing the stowage up in this way also permits a more rapid distribution of the lifejackets.

7. Child lifejackets should either be stowed in separate lockers or in lockers which have been internally subdivided.

8. Lockers should be clearly marked to indicate their contents, ie that they contain adult or child lifejackets, or both, and the number of each type as appropriate. A lifejacket donning notice for each type of lifejacket should be posted on the exterior and interior of the door unless a notice posted close to the door is not obscured when the door is open. Each locker should be identified by a number.

9. The securing arrangements on lifejacket locker doors should combine ease of access in an emergency, deterrence to unauthorised persons and some protection from inadvertent opening due to heavy rolling or an excessive list. Where doors are locked keys should be readily accessible in break glass boxes. Alternatively, the use of Customs seal wire, which should deter unauthorised opening of the locker, could be used to retain the door in its closed position and still allow it to be opened readily when required. It will also serve to indicate whether the door has been opened by unauthorised persons.

10. Where practicable, vertical doors should open in a forward or aft direction rather than athwartships. All lifejacket locker doors should be provided with means for holding them in the open position when lifejackets are being distributed.

11. Lockers should incorporate adequate ventilation and drainage facilities and lockers stowed on deck should be so located and designed to prevent the ingress of sea or rain water.

12. Care should be taken when stowing lifejackets that ceiling fittings such as sprinklers and lights are not obstructed. Consideration should be given to marking stowage heights on locker bulkheads.

Identification of child lifejackets

13. Existing lifejackets which are marked "For persons of less than 32 kg" should be also marked with the word CHILD in letters at least 50 mm high. The manufacturer should be consulted to ensure that any ink or adhesive used is compatible with the lifejacket cover material or outer skin as appropriate.

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