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MSC.1/Circ.1656 28 November 2022

## **GMDSS OPERATING GUIDANCE FOR SHIPS IN DISTRESS SITUATIONS**

- 1 The Maritime Safety Committee, at its 106th session (2 to 11 November 2022), approved the revised *GMDSS operating guidance for ships in distress situations*, as set out in the annex, prepared by the Sub-Committee on Navigation, Communications and Search and Rescue (NCSR), at its ninth session (21 to 30 June 2022).
- 2 This circular provides guidance concerning the use of appropriate radiocommunication equipment in distress situations, in accordance with chapter IV of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974. The Guidance in the annex is recommended to be displayed on ships' bridges as an A4 size poster.
- 3 Member Governments are invited to bring the annexed Guidance to the attention of seafarers and all other parties concerned.
- This circular becomes effective on 1 January 2024, superseding COM/Circ.108 as from that date.

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**GMDSS OPERATING GUIDANCE FOR SHIPS IN DISTRESS SITUATIONS** Transmit, if time allows. Embark in Switch on Is vessel Yes distress call by survival craft with **EPIRB** and SART sinking or to be HF/MF/VHF DSC or VHF, SART and, immediately abandoned? RMSS\* if possible, EPIRB and leave on No No Transmit Communicate on Switch on Yes \ Yes Is immediate distress call by Response HF/MF/VHF or RMSS\* **EPIRB** and **SART** help needed? HF/MF/VHF DSC or received? to RCC and ships manually on board RMSS\* No **¥** No Notify RCC by Communicate on Yes Response A potential HF/MF/VHF DSC or HF/MF/VHF or RMSS\* problem exists? received? Yes to RCC and ships RMSS\* Recognized mobile satellite service Frequencies for Distress Communications 1. EPIRB should float free and activate automatically if it Digital selective calling (DSC) Radiotelephone cannot be taken into survival craft. VHF Channel 70 Channel 16 2. Where necessary, ships should use any appropriate means MF 2 187.5 kHz 2 182 kHz to alert other ships. HF4 4 125 kHz 4 207.5 kHz HF6 6 312.0 kHz 6 215 kHz 3. Nothing above is intended to preclude the use of any and HF8 8 291 kHz 8 414.5 kHz

ANNEX

HF12

HF16

12 577.0 kHz

16 804.5 kHz

12 290 kHz

16 420 kHz

all available means of distress alerting, including those

listed in COLREG 72, annex IV.