

**RESOLUTION A.624(15)**

Revoked by A.921(22)

*Adopted on 19 November 1987  
Agenda item 12*

**GUIDELINES ON TRAINING FOR THE PURPOSE OF LAUNCHING  
LIFEBOATS AND RESCUE BOATS FROM SHIPS MAKING  
HEADWAY THROUGH THE WATER**

THE ASSEMBLY,

RECALLING Article 15(j) of the Convention on the International Maritime Organization concerning the functions of the Assembly in relation to regulations and guidelines concerning maritime safety,

NOTING that in accordance with article VIII of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974 (the 1974 SOLAS Convention), the expanded Maritime Safety Committee on 17 June 1983 adopted amendments to chapter III of that Convention,

NOTING ALSO that regulations III/28.2 and III/16.3 of the 1983 SOLAS amendments provide for a launching capability of lifeboats on some ships and of rescue boats in general with the ship making headway at up to 5 knots,

NOTING FURTHER regulation III/18.3.9 concerning lifeboat and rescue boat launching drills carried out with the ship making headway which requires that if such drills are carried out they shall, because of the dangers involved, be practised in sheltered waters only and under the supervision of an officer experienced in such drills,

CONSIDERING the dangers involved in undertaking drills with the ship making headway and the guidance that should be given by Administrations to those wishing to undertake such drills to ensure that they are safely conducted and seafarers properly trained in launching survival craft and rescue boats with the ship making headway,

BEARING IN MIND that the requirement for launching lifeboats and rescue boats with the ship making headway at speeds of up to 5 knots is a maximum design parameter for the equipment concerned and is not a requirement for training or drills,

HAVING CONSIDERED the recommendation made by the Maritime Safety Committee at its fifty-second session,

1. ADOPTS the Guidelines for Training Crews for the Purpose of Launching Lifeboats and Rescue Boats from Ships Making Headway through the Water set forth in the Annex to the present resolution;
2. URGES Member Governments to bring these Guidelines to the attention of shipmasters and those involved with the training of seafarers in the launching of lifeboats and rescue boats.

## ANNEX

**GUIDELINES FOR TRAINING CREWS FOR THE PURPOSE OF LAUNCHING  
LIFEBOATS AND RESCUE BOATS FROM SHIPS MAKING  
HEADWAY THROUGH THE WATER**

1 Chapter III of the 1974 SOLAS Convention, as modified by the 1983 amendments, contains no mandatory training requirements for launching lifeboats and rescue boats from ships making headway through the water. However, if such training is undertaken, the Guidelines should be followed.

2 These Guidelines apply to the launching drills referred to in regulation III/18.3.9 of the 1983 SOLAS amendments, undertaken with lifeboats and rescue boats capable of being safely launched with the ship making headway at speeds of up to 5 knots in calm water, as prescribed in regulations III/16.3 and III/28.2, and therefore apply to new cargo ships of 20,000 tons gross tonnage and upwards, other new ships fitted with rescue boats, and any other ship fitted with lifeboats or rescue boats having on-load release gear adequately protected against accidental or premature use.

3 These Guidelines supplement the procedures to be followed for the particular equipment provided on board a ship as described in the instructions and information found in the ship's training manual required by regulation III/18.2. This will include instructions on launching and recovery, the use of the release gear, clearing the boat from the ship and, where applicable, the use of a painter. The boat's crew should be instructed in the procedures to be followed before the drill commences.

4 Drills should be carried out either on board a ship at anchor or alongside where there is a suitable relative movement between ship and water, or at a suitable shore establishment where similar conditions prevail. Alternatively, at the master's discretion, drills may be carried out on board a ship when making headway in sheltered waters. For safety purposes, it is not necessary when training to exercise at the maximum design 5 knot headway launching capability of the equipment. Drills should be carried out with a low relative water speed particularly where inexperienced personnel are involved. When planning the drill, consideration should be given to ensuring that, as far as practicable, the relative water speed will be at a minimum when recovering the boat.

5 None of the provisions in these Guidelines are intended to inhibit launching drills carried out on ships where such drills are carried out on a frequent and regular basis with fully trained and experienced boat crews.

6 When planning for and carrying out the launching drills referred to in regulation III/18.3.9, the following precautions should be taken:

- .1 Drills should only be carried out under the supervision of an officer experienced in such drills and under calm and clear conditions.
- .2 Provisions should be made for rendering assistance to the boat to be used in the drill in the event of unforeseen circumstances; for example, where practicable a second boat should be made ready for launching.

- .3 When practicable, the drill should be carried out when the ship has minimal freeboard.
- .4 Instructions as to procedures should be given to the boat's crew by the officer in charge before the drill commences.
- .5 The number of crew members in the boat should be the minimum compatible with the training to be carried out.
- .6 Lifejackets and, where appropriate, immersion suits should be worn.
- .7 Except in the case of totally enclosed boats, head protection should be worn.
- .8 For the purposes of the drill, skates, where fitted, should be removed unless they are designed to be retained under all launch conditions.
- .9 In the case of totally enclosed boats, all openings should be closed except for the helmsman's hatch which may be open to provide a better view for launching.
- .10 Two-way radiotelephone communications should be established between the officer in charge of lowering, the navigating bridge and the boat before lowering commences, and be maintained throughout the exercise.
- .11 During lowering and recovery and while the boat is close to the ship, steps should be taken to ensure that the ship's propeller is not turning, if practicable.
- .12 The boat's engine should be running before the boat enters the water.
- .13 The launching and recovery should be followed by a de-briefing session to consolidate the lessons learned.