

*Adopted on 20 November 1973
Agenda item 10*

**RECOMMENDATION ON RETRO-REFLECTIVE TAPES
ON LIFE-SAVING APPLIANCES**

THE ASSEMBLY,

NOTING Article 16(i) of the Convention on the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization concerning the functions of the Assembly,

HAVING CONSIDERED the Reports of the Maritime Safety Committee on its twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth sessions,

RESOLVES:

- (a) to adopt the Recommendation regarding the fitting of retro-reflective material on life-saving appliances, appearing at Annex hereto;
- (b) to invite all concerned to report to the Organization on the matters indicated in the Maritime Safety Committee's Recommendation;
- (c) to invite the Maritime Safety Committee to consider the matter further in due course in the light of relevant reports and to recommend the action required, if any.

ANNEX

**RECOMMENDATION ON RETRO-REFLECTIVE TAPES
ON LIFE-SAVING APPLIANCES**

THE MARITIME SAFETY COMMITTEE,

HAVING NOTED that the Administrations of a number of important maritime nations have either adopted or are in the process of adopting statutory provisions which entail the fitting of retro-reflective material on life-saving appliances,

HAVING DISCUSSED the merits of using retro-reflective material as an additional aid to search and rescue operations in the light of reports from certain Member Governments and Organizations concerned,

RECOMMENDS that Contracting Governments should encourage owners of all vessels under their flags to fit retro-reflective material on life-saving appliances for the purpose expressed in the paragraph above; guidelines as to the manner in which such material should be fitted are attached to this Recommendation for the benefit of the Administrations concerned,

RECOMMENDS FURTHER that in order to facilitate the elaboration of any further directions by IMCO on this subject as may be required, the Administrations and Organizations concerned should report to the Organization on any experiences gained by them with regard to:

- (a) distress cases where human lives have clearly been saved as a result of life-saving appliances having been fitted with retro-reflective material;

- (b) the long-term durability of such material; and
- (c) any other factors or test results, negative as well as positive, which are relevant to the use of such material.

GUIDELINES CONCERNING THE USE AND FITTING OF RETRO-REFLECTIVE MATERIAL ON LIFE-SAVING APPLIANCES

1. Life-boats

Retro-reflective tapes should be fitted on top of the gunwale as well as on the outside of the boat as near the gunwale as possible. The tapes should be sufficiently wide and long (approximately 5 x 30 cm) and should be spaced at suitable intervals (approximately 50 cm). If a canopy is fitted it should not be allowed to obscure the tapes fitted on the outside of the boat and the top of the canopy should be fitted with retro-reflective tapes similar to those mentioned above but shaped in the form of a cross and spaced at suitable intervals (approximately 50 cm).

2. Life-rafts

Retro-reflective tapes should be fitted around the canopy of the raft at suitable intervals (approximately 50 cm) and at a suitable height above the waterline. On inflatable life-rafts retro-reflective tapes should also be fitted on the underside of the floor (four tapes fitted at equal intervals around the outer edges on the bottom of the life-rafts). The tapes should be sufficiently wide and long (approximately 5 x 30 cm). A suitable cross-shaped marking of two such tapes should also be applied to the top of the canopy. On rafts which are not equipped with canopies at least four such tapes should be attached to and evenly spaced on the buoyancy chamber in such a manner that they are visible both from the air and sea.

3. Lifebuoys

Retro-reflective tape of a sufficient width (approximately 5 cm) should be applied around or on both sides of the body of the buoy at four evenly-spaced points.

4. Buoyant apparatus

Buoyant apparatus should be fitted with retro-reflective tapes in the same manner as rafts without canopies, always depending on the size and shape of the object. The reflectors should be visible from both the air and sea.

5. Life-jackets

Unless its cover material is retro-reflective, a life-jacket should be fitted with retro-reflective tapes sufficiently wide and long (approximately 5 x 10 cm). These tapes should be placed as high up on the jacket as possible in at least six places on the outside of the jacket and in at least as many places on the inside of the same by virtue of the fact that life-jackets are reversible.

6. The retro-reflective material to be used should, if possible, be of a type which can also act as an effective radar reflector, e.g. a tape with a metal foil backing.

7. To ensure effective performance under all conditions Administrations concerned are advised until further notice to use retro-reflective material which meets the conditions set by the United States Government specification LS-300-A of January 1970, which *inter alia* contains requirements with regard to reflective power and durability.

The illustrations reproduced in the Appendix to this Recommendation are intended to provide the Administrations concerned with some ideas as regards various layouts which could be used in connexion with the fitting of retro-reflective tape in accordance with the above guidelines.

APPENDIX



