

SUB-COMMITTEE ON SHIP DESIGN AND  
CONSTRUCTION  
10th session  
Agenda item 9

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**AMENDMENTS TO THE GUIDELINES FOR CONSTRUCTION, INSTALLATION,  
MAINTENANCE AND INSPECTION/SURVEY OF MEANS OF EMBARKATION AND  
DISEMBARKATION (MSC.1/CIRC.1331) CONCERNING THE RIGGING OF SAFETY  
NETTING ON ACCOMMODATION LADDERS AND GANGWAYS**

**Draft amendments to MSC.1/Circ.1331**

**Submitted by Denmark, Kingdom of the Netherlands,  
ICS, IAPH, BIMCO, IMPA, IFSMA and IHMA**

**SUMMARY**

*Executive summary:* This document proposes draft amendments to MSC.1/Circ.1331 on the *Guidelines for the construction, installation, maintenance and inspection of means of embarkation and disembarkation*, related to conditions under which safety netting shall be rigged, inspection of gangways and definitions of terms used in the circular.

*Strategic direction, if applicable:* 7

*Output:* 7.35

*Action to be taken:* Paragraph 13

*Related document:* MSC 106/16

**Introduction**

1 The Maritime Safety Committee (MSC), at its eighty-sixth session, with a view to providing specific guidance on the construction, installation, maintenance and inspection/survey of means of embarkation and disembarkation such as accommodation ladders and gangways required under SOLAS regulation II-1/3-9, approved the *Guidelines for construction, installation, maintenance and inspection/survey of means of embarkation and disembarkation* (MSC.1/Circ.1331), prepared by the Sub-Committee on Ship Design and Equipment (DE), at its fifty-second session.

2 MSC 106, having considered the proposal submitted in document MSC 106/16, agreed to include in its post-biennial agenda an output on "Amendment to the *Guidelines for construction, installation, maintenance and inspection/survey of means of embarkation and disembarkation* (MSC.1/Circ.1331) concerning the rigging of safety netting on accommodation ladders and gangways" and assigned the Sub-Committee as the coordinating organ, in association with the SSE Sub-Committee, as and when requested by the Sub-Committee, to amend the Guidelines.

## Discussion

3 The current guidelines in MSC.1/Circ.1331, paragraph 3.8 state:

*"A safety net should be mounted in way of the accommodation ladders and gangways where it is possible that a person may fall from the means of embarkation and disembarkation or between the ship and quayside."*

However, the guidelines do not stipulate the circumstances under which this risk becomes apparent, nor does it stipulate how the safety net should be mounted in such case.

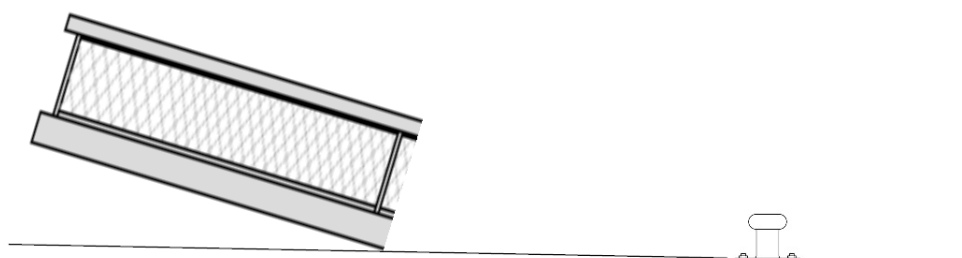
4 It is recognized that the interpretation of paragraph 3.8 of MSC.1/Circ.1331 by some authorities has led to the requirement of the persistent rigging of safety netting from the ship's deck to the outboard side of an accommodation ladder, regardless of the presence of side nets.

5 The co-sponsors consider that the possibility of a person falling from the means of embarkation and disembarkation or between the ship and quayside is limited to the following hazards:

- .1 a person falls over the top railing of the means of (dis)embarkation; or
- .2 a person falls through the sides of the means of (dis)embarkation.

6 The co-sponsors are of the view that the hazard of falling over the top railing of the means of (dis)embarkation is adequately mitigated if this railing is installed in accordance with the relevant international standards (i.e. ISO 5488:2015 on *Shipbuilding – Accommodation ladders* and ISO 7061:2015 on *Ships and marine technology – Aluminium shore gangways for seagoing vessels*). These standards require a handrail height of not less than 1,000 mm and, therefore, it follows that a safety net should not be required to mitigate this risk.

7 The co-sponsors are furthermore of the view that the hazard of falling through the sides of the means of (dis)embarkation is adequately mitigated if a side net has been rigged between the rigid top railing and the base of the means of (dis)embarkation). Therefore, it follows that a safety net should not be required in such case to mitigate this risk.



**Figure 1: Side view on a typical arrangement of a side net**

8 Furthermore, it is recognized that the rigging of the safety net from the ship's deck to the outboard side of an accommodation ladder is, in itself, a hazardous activity and puts the crew assigned with this task at risk, particularly at night or in bad weather. Moreover, the traditional rigging of safety netting does not prevent persons falling on to the quay over the outboard side of the accommodation ladder.

9 The co-sponsors are, therefore, of the view that paragraph 3.8 of MSC.1/Circ.1331 requires further clarification and, moreover, in the interest of safety, should offer flexibility to apply alternative arrangements, such as side nets, which render the hazardous rigging of a safety net unnecessary.

10 The co-sponsors also believe that it should be clarified that during inspections of the gangway, safety pins, side nets and its securing points shall also be examined.

11 To prevent misunderstandings, definitions for *gangway*, *accommodation ladder*, *safety net* and *side net* should be added to the circular.

### **Proposal**

12 In light of the discussion in paragraphs 3 to 10, the co-sponsors propose the draft amendments to the Guidelines as contained in the annex for consideration by the Sub-Committee.

### **Action requested of the Sub-Committee**

13 The Sub-Committee is invited to consider the above, the proposal in paragraph 11 and the draft amendments set out in the annex and take action, as appropriate.

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## ANNEX

### DRAFT REVISIONS TO THE ANNEX TO THE GUIDELINES FOR CONSTRUCTION, INSTALLATION, MAINTENANCE AND INSPECTION/SURVEY OF MEANS OF EMBARKATION AND DISEMBARKATION (MSC.1/CIRC.1331)

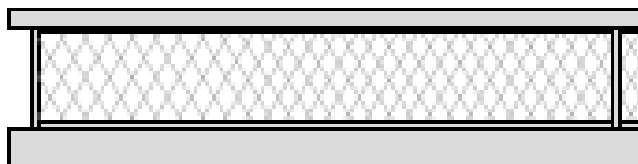
The following changes (new text underlined and shaded grey) are proposed:

.....

#### 3.8 Rigging (safety net)

3.8.1 A safety net should be mounted in way of the accommodation ladders and gangways where it is possible that a person may fall from the means of embarkation and disembarkation or between the ship and quayside.

3.8.2 The hazard of a person falling through the sides of the means of (dis) embarkation is considered to be adequately mitigated if a side net has been rigged between the rigid top railing and the base of the ladder or gangway (see figure 1).



**Figure 1: Safety net between top railing and base of ladder**

3.8.3 The hazard of falling over the top railing of the access equipment is considered to be adequately mitigated if this railing is installed in accordance with the relevant international standards (i.e. ISO 5488 2015 on *Shipbuilding – Accommodation ladders* and ISO 7061:2015 on *Ships and marine technology – Aluminum shore gangways for seagoing vessels*). These standards require a handrail height of not less than 1,000 mm.

3.8.4 A safety net is not required if the provisions of 3.8.2 and 3.8.3 are met.

(..)

#### 5.1.1 Accommodation ladder

5.1.1.1 The following items should be thoroughly examined during annual surveys required by SOLAS regulations I/7 and I/8 and checked for satisfactory condition of the accommodation ladder:

- steps;
- platforms;
- all support points such as pivots, rollers, etc.;
- all suspension points such as lugs, brackets, etc.;
- stanchions, safety pins, rigid handrails, hand ropes and turntables, side netting including its securing points;
- davit structure, wire and sheaves, etc.; and
- any other relevant provisions stated in these Guidelines.

(..)

### **5.1.2 Gangway**

5.1.2.1 The following items should be thoroughly examined during annual surveys required by SOLAS regulations I/7 and I/8 and checked for satisfactory condition of the gangway:

- .1 treads;
- .2 side stringers, cross-members, decking, deck plates, etc.;
- .3 all support points such as wheel, roller, etc.;
- .4 stanchions, safety pins, rigid handrails, hand ropes; side nets and their securing points; and
- .5 any other relevant provisions stated in these Guidelines.

(..)

## **6 Definitions**

6.1 An "accommodation ladder" is a means of (dis)embarkation which is rigged parallel to the ship's side or at a narrow angle to the ship's side depending on the freeboard of the ship and the ship or structure to or from which a person is transferred, as well as on its intended purpose (e.g. transfer of persons at sea in combination with a pilot ladder, transfer of persons while moored alongside a quay).

6.2 A "gangway" is a means of (dis)embarkation usually rigged perpendicular to the ship's side under small inclination and generally acting as a bridge between the ship and the quayside or another structure.

6.3 A "safety net" is a net which is rigged between the ship's side and the means of (dis)embarkation to prevent a person from falling into the water or onto the quayside from a means of (dis)embarkation.

6.4 A "side net" is a net which is rigged between the topside hand railing and the bottom of the means of (dis)embarkation to avoid that a person falls from the means of (dis)embarkation by slipping between the topside hand railing and the bottom of the means of (dis)embarkation.