

Shipping & Transport - Cyprus

New circular sets out revised safety equipment guidelines

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June 26 2013

The Department of Merchant Shipping recently published new guidelines regarding the periodic inspection and maintenance of safety equipment, including:

- fixed fire detection and extinguishing systems;
- portable and other fire extinguishers;
- self-contained breathing apparatus;
- emergency escape breathing apparatus;
- oxygen cylinders for medical use;
- self-contained air support systems for lifeboats; and
- compressed air cylinders for use in inflatable life rafts.

The new guidelines have been set out by the department in Circular 14/2013 and reflect the recommendations of the International Maritime Organisation's Maritime Safety Committee, as detailed in its May 31 2013 circular (MSC1/Circ1432). Given the recent advances in fire protection systems and appliances, this circular is considerably more comprehensive than MSC/Circ850, which it replaces.

The revised guidelines apply to all ships and elaborate on the minimum recommended level of maintenance and inspections for fire protection systems and appliances. They require all relevant equipment to be inspected by a suitably qualified person in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations or, where no such recommendations exist, at specified intervals.

The provisions of the circular apply to Cyprus-registered ships with effect from the first safety equipment-related survey taking place on or after May 31 2013.

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