
Life-Saving Appliances—The Provision of Rescue Boats on Ships Fitted with Free Fall Lifeboats

Notice to Shipbuilders, Shipowners, Masters and Ships' Officers

1. The Merchant Shipping (Life-Saving Appliances) Regulations 1986 (SI 1986 No. 1066) allow the fitting of free fall totally enclosed lifeboats on ships of Class VII, VII(T), VIII, VIII(A), VIII(T), VIII(A)(T) and IX. Under the same regulations any lifeboat may be accepted as a rescue boat provided that it also complies with the requirements of a rescue boat.
2. Trials of free fall lifeboats being used as rescue boats have shown that they cannot be recovered safely in conditions other than calm. The Department has concluded that free fall lifeboats are not acceptable as rescue boats.
3. The Department recommends that existing and new ships fitted with free fall lifeboats should be provided with a rescue boat and launching arrangements which comply with the requirements for rescue boats.

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