



Office of
Deputy Commissioner
of Maritime Affairs

THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA
LIBERIA MARITIME AUTHORITY

Marine Notice

SAF-016
Rev. 11/24

TO: ALL SHIPOWNERS, OPERATORS, MASTERS AND OFFICERS OF MERCHANT SHIPS, AND AUTHORIZED CLASSIFICATION SOCIETIES

SUBJECT: Watertight Doors on Passenger Ships

References: (a) SOLAS 74, as amended, Regulation 22 of Chapter II-1
(b) [MSC.1/Circ.1380 - Guidance for watertight doors on passenger ships which may be opened during navigation](#)
(c) [MSC.1/Circ. 1564 – Revised guidance for watertight doors on passenger ships which may be opened during navigation](#)

PURPOSE

This Notice provides instructions to vessel owners, operators/managers and recognized organizations for applying for authorization for watertight doors on passenger ships to be opened, or to remain open, during navigation.

APPLICABILITY:

This Marine Notice applies to all Liberian registered passenger ships requesting the following authorization, as applicable:

- 1) On existing ships for watertight doors to be opened, or remain open, during navigation.
- 2) On new ships for watertight doors to be opened during navigation

1.0 Definitions

New ship: a ship for which the building contract is placed on or after 1 January 2020; in absence of building contract, the keel is laid, or which are at a similar stage of construction on or after 1 July 2020 or the delivery of which is on or after 1 January 2024.

Existing ship: a ship which is not a new ship.

Category A watertight door: a watertight door that may be left open during navigation (for existing ships only)

Category B watertight door: A watertight door that may be opened during navigation when work in the immediate vicinity of the door necessitates it being opened, according to SOLAS regulation II-1/22.3. The door must be immediately closed when the task which necessitated it being open is finished.

Category C watertight door: A watertight door that may be opened during navigation to permit the passage of passengers or crew, according to SOLAS regulation II-1/22.3. The door must be immediately closed when transit through the door is complete.

Category D watertight door: A watertight door of a width of more than 1.2 m in machinery spaces as permitted by SOLAS regulation II-1/13.10, shall remain closed during navigation except in case of urgent necessity at the discretion of the master according to SOLAS regulation II-1/22.4. Additionally, watertight doors fitted in watertight bulkheads dividing cargo between deck spaces in accordance with SOLAS regulation II-1/13.9.1 or dividing cargo spaces in accordance with SOLAS regulation II-1/14.2, shall be closed before the voyage commences and shall be closed during navigation according to SOLAS regulation II-1/22.5.

Floatability assessment: Assessment intended to provide a measure of residual stability if category B watertight doors are opened for extended periods of time when navigating in non-hazardous areas if necessitated by work in the immediate vicinity of the door.

2.0 Background

The Maritime Safety Committee, at its ninety-eighth session (7 to 16 June 2017), adopted [MSC Resolution 421\(98\)](#), containing, inter alia, amendments to the SOLAS Chapter II-1 subdivision and damage stability regulations.

In this regard, one of the amendments contained in [MSC Resolution 421\(98\)](#), which entered into force on 1 January 2020, removed a provision in regulation II-1/22, that had permitted certain watertight doors (i.e., Watertight Doors category A) to remain open during navigation, if authorized by the Administration, therefore not permitting new ships to have Category A doors.

Consequently, the Committee, with a view to providing updated guidance for watertight doors on passenger ships which may be opened during navigation under SOLAS regulation II-1/22 and their impact on the damage stability survivability, approved [MSC.1/Circ.1564](#) "Revised guidance for watertight doors on passenger ships which may be opened during navigation".

It should therefore, be noted that:

- 1) [MSC.1/Circ.1564](#) removes Category A watertight doors and introduces a floatability assessment for Category B watertight doors;
- 2) [MSC.1/Circ.1380](#) requires a Floatability assessment for Category A watertight doors only; and
- 3) [MSC.1/Circ.1380](#) is not superseded by [MSC.1/Circ. 1564](#) and still applicable to existing ships.

3.0 Watertight doors assessment and periodical review

Recognized Organizations (RO) assessing the application aimed at obtaining the authorization for the watertight doors to be opened or to remain open shall ensure the following:

- 1) Application to be made to Liberia through the RO classing the vessel;

- 2) The damage stability and floatability assessment shall be verified;
- 3) Provide the category of watertight doors being applied for Category A, B, C, or D (as applicable based on the age of the vessel) including the proposed justifications relevant to the categorization of said watertight doors;
- 4) Verify that the application contains:
 - .1 all requested information regarding the categorization of the watertight doors as per Paragraph 6 of [MSC.1/Circ.1380](#) or [MSC.1/Circ.1564](#) (as applicable to the vessel);
 - .2 a copy of the vessel damage and fire control plans with all watertight doors clearly indicated;
 - .3 a copy of the Company`s operational instructions relevant to the operations of the watertight doors;
 - .4 a copy of the Company`s risk assessment relevant to the survivability and the results of the floatability assessment; and
 - .5 for existing ships only, checklist in Appendix 2 of [MSC.1/Circ.1380](#) which provides the technical standards for watertight doors on passenger ships.

Once the above application has been approved by the Administration, the RO shall ensure that the watertight doors categories are recorded in the Damage Control Plan and in the list of operational limitations.

At every load-line renewal survey, the RO shall review the plan of the watertight doors and relevant categorization to ensure that the approved arrangements are still reflecting the current on-board situation, and no changes have been made.

4.0 Modifications, transfer of Class or change of Flag

In case of modifications, the RO shall contact the Administration to start a new process for the categorization of the watertight doors.

In case of transfer of Class, the authorization letter in paragraph 7 below shall be reissued with the name of the gaining Classification Society/RO of the vessel.

In case of transfer of Flag, the Administration may accept the existing authorization provided by the losing Flag, on the condition that this is consistent with the requirements stated in [MSC.1/Circ.1380](#) or [MSC.1/Circ.1564](#), as applicable to the vessel.

5.0. Watertight doors operational instruction requirements (as per MSC.1/Circ. 1380 Para 10 and MSC.1/Circ.1564 Para 9)

Operational instructions for watertight doors shall be included in the ship's stability information and address the situations described in below paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2.

In addition:

- 1) A copy of the operational instructions shall be located at the central operating console at the navigation bridge so as to be readily available to the officer in charge of the navigation watch;
- 2) The operational instructions shall state the means of verifying the correct position of all watertight doors; and
- 3) The operational instructions shall cover procedures for operating watertight doors to permit safe passage of passengers, in particular, that watertight doors shall only be operated by qualified persons and not by passengers

5.1 Operational instructions in potentially hazardous situations

A potentially hazardous situation is defined as a situation when the ship is on a voyage and operating under the conditions below:

- .1 in waters with high traffic density;
- .2 near coastal waters;
- .3 in heavy weather;
- .4 in dangerous ice conditions;
- .5 in waters where soundings are unreliable;
- .6 during periods of restricted visibility;
- .7 within port limits or compulsory pilotage waters;
- .8 when loose objects are nearby, which could potentially prevent the watertight door from being closed; or
- .9 under any condition when the ship's master considers the situation to necessitate all watertight doors to be closed.

The operational instructions shall specify that, while the ship is navigating in potentially hazardous situations, every watertight door of category B or C be closed except when a person is passing through it. If such doors are opened for passage, then it shall be closed immediately after passage.

5.2 Operational instructions in normal situations

A normal situation is defined as a non-hazardous situation when the ship is on a voyage and operating in conditions other than as described in paragraph 5.1.1 to 5.1.9 above.

The operational instructions shall specify that while the ship is navigating in normal situations each watertight door of category B or C shall be operated in accordance with the assigned category

5.3 Markings and postings

The assigned category and meaning of each category shall be clearly marked on both sides of either the watertight door or the bulkhead adjacent to the door to ensure correct operation.

The assigned category for each watertight door shall be indicated on or near the central operating console located on the navigation bridge in order that the correct status of all doors can be ascertained.

6.0 Floatability assessment

This assessment is intended to provide a measure of residual stability as defined in the applicable MSC.1/Circular appendixes:

- Appendix to MSC.1/Circ.1564 applicable to new ships: floatability assessment is intended to provide a measure of residual stability if category B watertight doors are opened for extended periods of time when navigating in non-hazardous areas if necessitated by work in the immediate vicinity of the door; only the individual category B watertight door under consideration need be assumed open for the calculation; or
- Appendix 1 to MSC.1/Circ.1380 applicable to existing ships: floatability assessment is only for the purpose of determining the impact of open watertight doors on ship survivability under SOLAS regulation II-1/22.4. It is intended that this floatability assessment be applied only after the need for a watertight door(s) to remain open during navigation is established.

Regarding the extent of damage to be assumed for the floatability assessment, this shall be as defined in SOLAS regulation II-1/8.3.

In addition, watertight compartments inboard of the transverse extent of damage shall be assumed flooded, irrespective of whether any longitudinal bulkheads are fitted with watertight doors, if:

- 1) the inboard compartment is within the longitudinal damage extent; and
- 2) the inboard compartment is connected by the watertight door under consideration.

If any lesser damage extents than indicated above would result in a more severe condition with respect to the floatability criteria, then such damage extents shall be assumed in the calculations.

In this context, the damage extent shall be assumed as both penetrating and not penetrating the double bottom.

The floatability assessment shall account for the worst case involving the additional flooding of the compartment connected:

- .1 by the category B watertight door under consideration (new ships); or
- .2 with watertight doors requested to remain open during navigation. The extent of flooding assumed for the floatability assessment calculations should be as follows: any watertight door that is requested to remain open during navigation may be considered closed in each case of flooding if it is in a watertight bulkhead that is located away from the damage extent by at least one undamaged transverse watertight bulkhead/door (existing ships).

Regarding the criteria for the floatability assessment, it is to be considered that for each assumed flooding case, the floatability criteria described below (para .1, to .4) shall be met at the deepest subdivision draught at level trim. For this loading condition, the limiting KG or GM shall be assumed in the calculations.

- .1 The bulkhead deck may be immersed provided that no progressive flooding occurs (i.e. weathertight openings may not be immersed; only watertight openings may be immersed).
- .2 The maximum positive righting lever shall not be less than 0.05 m.
- .3 The range of positive righting levers shall not be less than 7°.
- .4 The maximum equilibrium heel angle shall not exceed 15°.

This Administration may accept alternative methodologies if it is satisfied that at least the same degree of safety as represented by this procedure is achieved (reference is made to SOLAS 74, as amended, Regulation II-1/4.3).

7.0 Flag Administration authorization letter

In case of a positive outcome, at the completion of the reviewing process, this Administration will issue the authorization letter, to be kept in the ship`s file and readily available on board. (See [ANNEX I](#))

Questions regarding this Marine Notice should be referred to regsandstandards@liscr.com or telephone +1-703-790-3434.

ANNEX I



THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA
LIBERIA MARITIME AUTHORITY

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[ISSUEDATE]

To,
XXXX

CC: Classification Society

Name of Ship	Distinctive Number Or Letters	IMO Number	Port of Registry	Gross Tonnage
[VESSELNAME]	[O.N]	[IMONUM]	MONROVIA	[GROSSTON]

Subject: Authorization for watertight doors on passenger ships to be opened, or remain open, during navigation (MSC.1/Circ.1380 or MSC.1/Circ.1564 as applicable)

The Administration has authorized the personnel identified in the Company`s shipboard procedures, on board the above-mentioned vessel, to open, or remain open the below categorized watertight doors [AS APPLICABLE], during navigation, provided that:

1. requirements stated in Marine Notice SAF-016 are fully satisfied and implemented.
2. the vessel's classification society inspects the vessel at every load-line renewal survey to ascertain that no modifications have been made to the watertight doors.

Categorization and location of the watertight doors:

[XXXXXXXX]

Failure to comply with any of the above requirements will void this authorization.

This letter will remain valid until [EXPIRATIONDATELONG] as long as the vessel maintains a valid Passenger Ship Safety Certificate.

A copy of this letter shall be kept on board the vessel, a copy should be provided to the vessel`s class society for their information and a copy should be provided to port State authorities upon request.

If you have any questions on this matter, please contact this office at RegsandStandards@liscr.com.

[SIGNATURE]

[QRCODE]

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