

## LOCAL VESSELS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### Proposal for obviating the need for lifejackets provided on board Class II vessels to be fitted with lifejacket lights

#### Purpose

This paper seeks members' endorsement on the proposal for obviating the need for lifejackets provided on board Class II vessels to be fitted with lifejacket lights.

#### Background

2. Under section 2.8, Chapter VII of the Code of Practice - Safety Standards for Class I, II and III Vessels ('CoP')<sup>1</sup>, the lifejackets provided on vessels plying in waters beyond Hong Kong shall be fitted with lifejacket lights.

3. Class I Vessels are generally not allowed to ply in waters beyond Hong Kong, and hence it is not necessary for lifejackets provided on board these vessels to be fitted with lifejacket lights.

4. Class III fishing vessels ~~with "Multiple Entry Permit"~~ which have already been exempted from declaring imports and exports are allowed to operate in waters beyond Hong Kong without any plying limits. Hence, the lifejackets provided on board these vessels must be fitted with lifejacket lights.

5. For Class II vessels operating in Hong Kong waters only, it is not necessary for lifejackets provided on board these vessels to be fitted with lifejacket lights. However, a considerable number of Class II vessels are allowed to operate within the river trade area, and the lifejackets provided on board these vessels shall be fitted with lifejacket lights according to the requirements of the existing CoP. The trade has indicated that though operating in waters beyond Hong Kong, these vessels are confined in the river trade area, comprising mostly inland watercourses. Given that the conditions of these waters are no worse than those in Hong Kong waters, it has called for a re-examination of the need for vessels operating in waters beyond Hong Kong yet confined in the river trade area to provide on board lifejackets fitted with lifejacket lights. By relaxing the requirement, the measure could help the trade to cut capital outlay amid the present harsh business environment.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.mardep.gov.hk/hk/pub\\_services/ocean/pdf/lvs\\_cop123c.pdf](http://www.mardep.gov.hk/hk/pub_services/ocean/pdf/lvs_cop123c.pdf)

## Consideration

6. In response to the views expressed by the trade, the Marine Department ('MD') has conducted a benchmarking analysis for safety sake. As a lifejacket performance comparison conducted previously for the development of a lifejacket suitable for both adults and children was based on the requirements of the maritime safety rules of Australia and New Zealand, the benchmark of the analysis was also based on the relevant requirements of the two maritime authorities for consistency. Extracts of the benchmarking analysis are shown in the table below:

<u>Country</u>	<u>Source of Information</u>	<u>Class of Vessel</u>	<u>Operation Area</u>	<u>Lifejacket Light</u>
Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ National Standard for Commercial Vessels ('NSCV') – Part B General Requirements</li> <li>➤ NSCV – Part C Design and Construction, Sub-section 7A Safety Equipment(May 2015)</li> </ul>	II D – Non-passenger vessels	Partially calm waters with the following typical features: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ installed with rescue facilities or laying close to coastline</li> <li>➤ significant wave height:2.5m</li> <li>➤ water temperature : 7 - 37°C</li> <li>➤ air temperature : 1 - 45°C</li> </ul>	Not required
New Zealand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Maritime Rules Part 20: Operation Limits</li> <li>➤ Maritime Rules Part 42A: Safety Equipment - Lifesaving Apppliance</li> </ul>	Non-passenger vessels, which are non-SOLAS ships	Will not operate beyond restricted limits <sup>2</sup>	Not required

<sup>2</sup> Restricted limits refer to enclosed water limits and inshore limits. Inshore limits are defined as the area ranging within 30 [miles nautical miles](#) of a typhoon shelter.

7. The conditions of the operation area shown in the above table are highly similar to those for Class II vessels that are allowed to operate within the river trade area, and are particularly so for comparison of the followings: (a) the range of a river trade area does not normally extend beyond 12 miles of the coastline; (b) a river trade area is mostly comprised of inland watercourses whose conditions are comparable to those of sheltered waters; (c) Hong Kong, situated at the subtropical region, has a moderate climate with an average significant wave height of 1.5 m over a year; and (d) efficient emergency rescue services are readily available for vessels in Hong Kong and the Pearl River Delta area.

## **Proposal**

8. In view of the considerations set out in paragraphs 6 and 7, MD proposes that it is not necessary for lifejackets provided on board Class II vessels to be fitted with lifejacket lights.

## **Sub-committee on Survey Works of Local Vessels**

9. The Sub-committee on Survey Works of Local Vessels at its meeting on 6 June 2016 endorsed the proposal of this paper<sup>3</sup> and agreed to submit the proposal to the Local Vessels Advisory Committee for discussion.

## **Way Forward**

10. Subject to Members' comments, MD will amend the relevant CoP to implement the proposal.

Local Vessels Safety Branch  
Shipping Division  
Marine Department  
June 2016  
(Updated in July 2016)

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<sup>3</sup> Sub-committee on Survey Works of Local Vessels Paper No. 4/2016  
([http://www.mardep.gov.hk/hk/aboutus/pdf/lvac\\_sc\\_survey\\_p1604c.pdf](http://www.mardep.gov.hk/hk/aboutus/pdf/lvac_sc_survey_p1604c.pdf))