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MSC/Circ.1107
25 May 2004

**APPLICATION OF SOLAS REGULATION II-1/3-6 ON ACCESS TO AND WITHIN SPACES IN, AND FORWARD OF, THE CARGO AREA OF OIL TANKERS AND BULK CARRIERS
AND
APPLICATION OF THE TECHNICAL PROVISIONS FOR MEANS OF ACCESS FOR INSPECTIONS**

1 The Maritime Safety Committee, at its seventy-eighth session (12 to 21 May 2004), acknowledged concerns expressed with regard to problems which might be encountered when implementing the requirements of SOLAS regulation II-1/3-6 on Access to and within spaces in the cargo area of oil tankers and bulk carriers, adopted by resolution MSC.134(76) which will enter into force on 1 July 2004, and of the associated Technical provisions for means of access for inspections, adopted by resolution MSC.133(76) which will become effective from 1 January 2005.

2 Accordingly, the Committee adopted amendments to SOLAS regulation II-1/3-6 and the Technical provisions for means of access for inspections, by resolutions MSC.151(78) and MSC.158(78) respectively. These amendments are expected to enter into force on 1 January 2006.

3 In adopting the amendments, the Committee recognized that oil tankers of 500 gross tonnage and over and bulk carriers of 20,000 gross tonnage and over, constructed on or after 1 January 2005, will still be required to be fitted with permanent means of access complying with SOLAS regulation II-1/3-6 and the Technical provisions for means of access for inspections, as adopted by resolutions MSC.134(76) and MSC.133(76), until 1 January 2006. The Committee, therefore, as indicated in operative paragraph 6 of resolution MSC.151(78), resolved that SOLAS Contracting Governments may apply in advance the amended regulation II-1/3-6 of the Convention and the Technical provisions for means of access for inspections, as adopted by resolutions MSC.151(78) and MSC.158(78), to ships flying their flag constructed on or after 1 January 2005 in lieu of SOLAS regulation II-1/3-6 and the Technical provisions for means of access for inspections, as adopted by resolutions MSC.134(76) and MSC.133(76) respectively.

4 The Committee invites SOLAS Contracting Governments to take account of this decision when surveying and certifying oil tankers and bulk carriers under SOLAS regulations I/8 and I/12 and when exercising port State control under SOLAS regulation I/19.