

INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION
4 ALBERT EMBANKMENT
LONDON SE1 7SR

Telephone: 020 7587 3152
Fax: 020 7587 3210



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**PROMOTING AND VERIFYING CONTINUED FAMILIARIZATION OF
GMDSS OPERATORS ON BOARD SHIPS**

1 The Maritime Safety Committee, at its eighty-first session (10 to 19 May 2006), following the proposals made by the Sub-Committee on Standards of Training and Watchkeeping at its thirty-seventh session, approved the recommendations concerning promoting and verifying continued familiarization of GMDSS operators on board ships, set out in the attached annex.

2 Member Governments are invited to bring the annexed recommendations to the attention of all parties concerned for consideration and action, as appropriate.

ANNEX**PROMOTING AND VERIFYING CONTINUED FAMILIARIZATION OF
GMDSS OPERATORS ON BOARD SHIPS**

1 There has been concern that many GMDSS operators on board ships have a lack of familiarization regarding operational performance during Distress, Urgency and Safety communications, as well as with simple technical elements, which is vital for the safety of life at sea.

2 Taking into account the above concerns, it is recommended that:

- .1 the ship's safety management system should provide for all personnel who may be required to operate the GMDSS equipment to receive familiarization and ship-specific training, on joining the ship, and at appropriate intervals thereafter;
 - .2 familiarization, drills and onboard training of the GMDSS equipment should allow GMDSS operators to demonstrate their familiarization at any time;
 - .3 such familiarization should be verified during flag State inspections or port State control; and
 - .4 if such verification turns out to be negative, the Company should take appropriate measures according to the flag State Administration requirements.
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