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Circular letter No.3005
10 November 2009

To: All IMO Members
Contracting Governments to the International Convention for the Safety of Life
at Sea, 1974

Subject: **UAE Yacht Regulations**

Statement by the Government of the United Arab Emirates

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit herewith the text of a statement by the Government of the United Arab Emirates concerning the UAE Yacht Regulations for yachts above 24 metres which are not engaged in commercial trade.

The Secretary-General would be grateful if steps could be taken to bring this information to the attention of the appropriate authorities.

Statement by the UAE National Transport Authority dated on 1st November 2009**EQUIVALENCE:**

1. The UAE National Transport Authority observes that private non-commercial yachts are not encompassed within the scope of International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974 (SOLAS) regardless of the mandatory applicability of other IMO Instruments for this segment of vessels.
2. The UAE National Transport Authority considers that this segment should have a safety standard equal to that of SOLAS for the corresponding same number of persons onboard and feels compelled to make special provisions for a UAE Yacht Safety Certificate for the international certification of pleasure yachts of 24 metres in length and above which are not engaged in commercial trade.

BACKGROUND:

3. The existing conventions and regulations applied to commercial yachts are based on the SOLAS Convention which implies the following limitations for the yacht industry and owners:
 - a) only yachts of 500 GT and above can get international safety certificates;
 - b) the number of passengers is limited to 12;
 - c) commercial yachts are certified having a safety level equivalent to cargo ships.
4. Most of the yachts in the lowest segment of size above 24 meters are built in series by established yacht manufacturers. The safety standard of these yachts reflects the safety of boats of less than 24 meters as given by the EU Directive for Recreational Boats and similar certification regimes. Such yachts are well tested before being released to the market and the serial production provides a uniform technical standard.
5. Larger yachts are increasingly being custom built based on individual designs. The segment of yachts larger than 40 meters is predominantly individually built to the Owner's design and specification. The largest yachts range from 65 meters to future lengths of more than 200 meters. These yachts exceed the maximum 3,000 / 5,000 GT size limits specified in presently available regulations for commercial yachts and also carry more than 12 guests in addition to the crew, which is the limit for formal certification as Cargo Ship with equivalencies in accordance with SOLAS.
6. The current codes and regulations for the larger yachts are based on conventional steel ship technology which imposes strong limitations on the innovative and future-orientated yacht industry. Accordingly the present statutory regime for certification of commercial yachts is not considered to be an appropriate long term solution for the non-commercial segment of the yacht industry which builds private yachts not intended for the leasing market.
7. The UAE National Transport Authority has identified a need for yacht regulations that address the larger size segment of the private yachts market, i.e. yachts above 24 meters, not intended for commercial use, without any restriction with respect to the number of guests onboard, nor to the maximum size of the yacht.
8. The safety level of private non-commercial yachts in accordance with the UAE Yacht Regulations is set to be equivalent or better than existing regulations for other vessels carrying the same number of persons onboard taking into account the size of the yacht and its area of operation. The UAE Yacht Regulations require full compliance with international mandatory statutory instruments that are applicable to any ship engaged in international voyages.
9. The UAE Yacht Regulations accommodate the novelty and innovation of this market segment. This has been achieved by establishing the relevant regulations on a functional basis.
10. Based upon the above, the UAE National Transport Authority has introduced the 'UAE Yacht Regulations' for private non-commercial yachts of all types above 24 metres, the text of which may be found on its website.

NOTIFICATION:

11. The UAE National Transport Authority, is of the view that the 'UAE Yacht Regulations' are an equivalent provision to SOLAS for the international certification of pleasure yachts of 24 metres in length and above which are not engaged in commercial trade and asks for recognition of the UAE Yacht Safety Certificate and circulation of this submission.