STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

1977 No. 1010

MERCHANT SHIPPING

SAFETY

The Merchant Shipping (Signals of Distress) Rules 1977

Made - - -	*15th June* 1977
Laid before Parliament	*22nd June* 1977
Coming into Operation	*15th July* 1977

The Secretary of State, in exercise of powers conferred by section 21(2) of the Merchant Shipping (Safety Convention) Act 1949(**a**), and now vested in him(**b**), and of all other powers enabling him in that behalf, hereby makes the following Rules:—

1.—(1) These Rules may be cited as the Merchant Shipping (Signals of Distress) Rules 1977 and shall come into operation on 15th July 1977.

(2) The Interpretation Act 1889(**c**) shall apply for the interpretation of these Rules as it applies for the interpretation of an Act of Parliament and as if these Rules and the Rules hereby revoked were Acts of Parliament.

(3) The Merchant Shipping (Signals of Distress) Rules 1965(**d**) are hereby revoked.

2. In these Rules the expression "signal of distress" means any of the signals of distress prescribed by Article 2(2) of the Collision Regulations and Distress Signals Order 1977(**e**) for use by vessels (other than seaplanes and hovercraft) as signals of distress.

3.—(1) No signal of distress shall be used by any vessel unless the master of the vessel so orders.

(2) The master of the vessel shall not order any signal of distress to be used by his vessel unless he is satisfied:—

(*a*) that his vessel is in serious and imminent danger, or that another ship or an aircraft is in serious and imminent danger and cannot of itself send that signal; and

(*b*) that the vessel in danger (whether his own vessel or another vessel) or the aircraft in danger, as the case may be, requires immediate assistance in addition to any assistance then available to her.

(**a**) 1949 c. 43. (**b**) S.I. 1970/1537 (1970 III, p. 5293). (**c**) 1889 c. 63.
(**d**) S.I. 1965/1550 (1965 II, p. 4526). (**e**) S.I. 1977/982 (1977 II, p.2728).

(3) The master of a vessel which has sent any signal of distress by means of radio or other means, shall cause that signal to be revoked, by all appropriate means as soon as he is satisfied that the vessel or aircraft to which the signal relates is no longer in need of assistance as aforesaid.

Stanley Clinton Davis,
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State,
Department of Trade.

15th June 1977.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This Note is not part of the Rules.)

These Rules supersede the Merchant Shipping (Signals of Distress) Rules 1965.

They prescribe the circumstances in which the signals of distress prescribed in the Collision Regulations and Distress Signals Order 1977 are to be used by vessels other than seaplanes and hovercraft.

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