

RECOMMENDATIONS

PARISMINA (11-18-42)

F.S. Walker

It is recommended that all life-saving suits be fitted with detachable gloves and equipped with two beackets across the back of the suits to facilitate pulling wearers from the water.

G. Whidden, Ch. Off.

Discipline - More and more discipline. More boat drills, that means putting boats in the water. More drills at anchor or out in open sea where men get used to handling boats. Launching lifeboats in sea way where men can become acquainted with the launching of lifeboats in various seas. I would like to recommend that all crews be trained in the proper handling of lifeboats, and lifeboat equipment in heavy weather, because the average man today shows a lack of intelligent use of life saving equipment. I would recommend a change of rubber life suits. Change to be made to the fasteners. Fasteners that would not slip and would not jam. Fasteners that are much stronger and durable. The rubber hat on suits to be increased in size. It is very difficult to stretch the rubber hat on your head with rubber gloves on. The gloves should be removed of all present suits due to the fact that once the rubber is soaked with oil from the seas, it makes it useless to handle them. The knife in the suit should be fitted with a handle to get it open. If you got those rubber gloves on, you can't open your knife. Have some sort of a handle, remove the gloves from the suit, or have a strap on the wrist. The life suit lights should be changed so that they will be workable in water covered with oil. Increase the size of the bulb or the battery, or something like that. Something because that oil settles on top of that glass and it cannot be seen. All men should carry sheath knives. If we would have had sheath knives, more lives would have been saved on the ship. The knives were very weak and the spring in the blade broke on about a dozen knives. We had to re-issue more knives to the men.

Knife - The knife was inefficient, yes. It wasn't workable in the water, or with the rubber suit. The sheath knife should be provided with those rubber suits in order to cut the lifeboat falls or debris. The life rafts should be provided with some sort of a rake to prevent them from flying up in the air when the explosion occurs. Increase strength of frames on water lights attached to life rafts. The frames of the water lights on life rafts were broken off or came adrift in heavy weather. The lifeboats should have more space to put equipment in or individual tanks for stowing water in. All boats should carry plugs in at sea, and rain water released after squalls. I would recommend that the crews be increased in size to look after life saving equipment and gear. I would recommend that more merchant ships have steel hatches installed.

Life Nets - I recommend changes in the life nets. That they be folded in the boats and dropped out of the boats when needed instead of being secured. The ladder should also be carried along with nets.

Davits - I recommend that the life lines between the davits be attached by small lines so that they can be grabbed from the boat deck, or swung into the ship's side so that they can go down the life line. I recommend a larger alarm bell in crew quarters.

Rafts - I think those rafts on the ship should be secured another way so they don't go up in the air when the ship is torpedoed. When the vessel was struck the rafts blew off the skid? Shot right straight up. Were the rafts launched at all? No, they landed on the deck.

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J. Scamell, 3rd Off.

Life suits - The rubber life suits are no good in their present state.

Painters - A statement made by the inspectors who made the last inspection of the PARISMINA at Boston said that the painters attached to the life rafts should be removed. This cost us three or four of our life rafts. I recommend that a notice be inserted in one of the bulletins to the effect that seaman shall be permitted to carry sheath knives, because the sheath knives were not allowed to be carried on our ship, and the knives that were in the life suits are unsatisfactory and not capable of doing any efficient work, that the life suits themselves aren't worth more than a fifty-fifty chance of living or dying. On the whole they were entirely unsatisfactory. The gloves on the life suits are too hard to work with, the zippers on the life suits come apart too easily, the collars on the life suits are too big, the hoods on the life suits are useless, the sides of the life suits are made entirely disproportionate to the men, and when the life suits are covered with oil, it's impossible for would-be rescuers to get a grip on the life suit or the man, and the man in a life suit is useless in a life boat. Do you know the name of the life suits which were used aboard the PARISMINA? Monar Life Saving Suit Mfg. Company.

PIERCE BUTLER (11-20-42)

G. P. Moodie, Master.

Lifeboats - How did you manage to launch the Number 1 boat with a starboard list with it full of water? We didn't launch it. We found it afloat after the ship sank. It released itself. When I saw it there, I sent the motorboat back to examine in and see if it was all right, and we had the sail out, and as the boat was all right, I went into it myself with 16 other men so we would have more room in the boats. We had plenty of room and everything in our boats, but if we had to take the number of men that were supposed to go in these boats, I would say they would be overcrowded.

YAKA (11-18-42)

H. Brown, Jr. 2nd Mate

Gravity davits - that's the only thing I could say. There are many recommendations I think can be done for the betterment. To have a little heavier rig on the rudder as far as pintles and gudgeons are concerned. Seemed to break off very easily.

JEREMIAH WADSWORTH (11-27-42)

A. Magnusdal, Master.

Lifeboats - I noted that No. 1 lifeboat had been carried away and was in the water foul of the net under No. 3 lifeboat. I instructed the chief officer to cut the foul boat clear. I then went back to my room, picked up a handbag which I kept handy at all times in case of an emergency. As the port boats hit the water, they were immediately swamped. We went to release No. 3 lifeboat. This boat was fouled. I took what men we had, pulled in the slack of the after fall, and cleared it, then lowered the boat into the water. This boat also immediately swamped. The reason for these boats swamping on being launched was due to the forward motion of the ship through the water. The ship was still going full speed.

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