**DISTRESS SIGNALS**

To be used by Ships, Aircraft or Persons in Distress

**FLARES**

- **Fire rocket** vertically.
- **Handheld pinpoint flare** shows exactly where you are – use inshore or in sight of other vessels.
- **In low cloud** fire at 45°.
- **Orange smoke** for use by day – especially in bright sunlight.
- **Hold at arm’s length downwind** – don’t look directly at the flare.

- **NEVER fire into the wind.**
- **NEVER fire a parachute flare** if a helicopter is approaching.

**LIFE SAVING SIGNALS**

For Ships, Aircraft or Persons in Distress

Maritime & Coastguard Agency
Communication and Innovation
Bay 2/30, Spring Place
105 Commercial Road
Southampton SO15 1EG

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**FLARES**

- **long range signal for use offshore**
- **handheld orange smoke**
- **white collision warning flare**
- **for use at night or in dull conditions to pinpoint position**

**This leaflet gives the illustrated Table of Life Saving Signals Required by V/29 of SOLAS**
# LIFE SAVING SIGNALS

To be used by Ships, Aircraft or Persons in Distress

## Search and Rescue Unit Replies

**You have been seen, assistance will be given as soon as possible.**

Orange smoke flare.

Three white star signals or three light and sound rockets fired at approximately 1 minute intervals.

## Surface to Air Signals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Message</th>
<th>International Code of Signals</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I require assistance</td>
<td>V</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I require medical assistance</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No or negative</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes or affirmative</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
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Note: Use International Code of Signal by means of lights or flags or by laying out the symbol on the deck or ground with items which have a high contrast to the background.

## Air to Surface Replies

**Message Understood.**

- Drop a message.
- Rocking wings.
- Flashing landing or navigation lights on and off twice.
- Morse code signal by light.

**Message Not Understood - Repeat.**

- Straight and level flight.
- Circling.
- Morse code signal by light.

## Surface to Air Replies

**Message Understood - I will comply.**

- Change course to required direction.
- Morse code signal by light.

**I am unable to comply.**

- Morse code signal by light.

Note: Use the signal most appropriate to prevailing conditions.

Note: As a non preferred alternative to rocking wings, varying engine tone or volume may be used.

## Air to Surface Direction Signals

Sequence of 3 manoeuvres meaning proceed to this direction.

1. **Circling.**
2. **Cross low, ahead a vessel rocking wings.**
3. **Overfly vessel and head in required direction.**

**Your assistance is no longer required.**

Cross low, astern of vessel rocking wings.

## Shore to Ship Signals

**Safe to land here.**

Vertical waving of both arms, white flag, light or flare.

Landing here is dangerous. Additional signals mean safer landing in direction indicated.

**OR**

- Morse code signal by light or sound.

**Safe to land here.**

Horizontal waving of white flag, light or flare. Putting one flag, light or flare on ground and moving off with a second indicates direction of safer landing.

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