



Maritime &
Coastguard
Agency

MERCHANT SHIPPING NOTICE

MSN XXX (M) The Workboat Code Edition 3

Notice to all designers, builders, owners, operators, employers, crews, masters of small workboats, pilot boats, remotely operated unmanned vessels, and Certifying Authorities.

This notice should be read with The Merchant Shipping (Small Workboats and Pilot Boats) Regulations 2023 (SI 2023/xxx) and replaces MSN 1892(M) and all previous Codes and Notices concerning small workboats and pilot boats.

Summary

This Merchant Shipping Notice (MSN) announces the latest amendment of the MCA publication “The Safety of Small Workboats and Pilot Boats – A Code of Practice” (formerly known as Edition 1 or the “Brown Code”). This revision will be known as Workboat Code Edition 3 and is underpinned by The Merchant Shipping (Small Workboats and Pilot Boats) Regulations 2023 (SI 2023/xxx), as amended, and is given effect by the provisions of Regulation 3(1).

The changes arising from the publication of Workboat Code Edition 3 apply to new vessels, constructed on or after **xx Month 2023**. This MSN describes how this amendment of the Code is applicable to other small workboats and pilot boats certificated under previous editions of the Code.

1. Introduction

1.1 In 1998, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency published “The Safety of Small Workboats and Pilot Boats – A Code of Practice” (also known as the “Brown Code” and also

referred to as Edition 1 (1998)), under the provisions of Regulation 3(1) of the Merchant Shipping (Small Workboats and Pilot Boats) Regulations 1998¹.

1.2 In 2018, the Agency published an updated version of the Code known as “The Workboat Code Edition 2” which replaced the Brown Code.

1.3 The latest edition of the Workboat Code has now been published as “The Safety of Small Workboats and Pilot Boats – A Code of Practice, known as “The Workboat Code Edition 3”.

1.4 Workboat Code Edition 3 replaces:

- a. The Safety of Small Workboats and Pilot Boats – A Code of Practice Edition 1 (the “Brown Code”);
- b. MGN 280 Small Vessels in Commercial Use for Sport or Pleasure, Workboats and Pilot Boats – Alternative Construction Standards, in so far as it applies to small workboats and pilot boats; and,
- c. The Workboat Code Edition 2, as amended.

2. The Workboat Code Edition 3

2.1 Workboat Code Edition 3 came into force on **xx Month 2023**.

2.2 Workboat Code Edition 3 shall apply to new vessels which are certificated from the date of entry into force. Existing vessels certificated under the Brown Code, the technical Annex to MGN 280 or Workboat Code Edition 2 shall follow the transitional provisions of Appendix 9 of the Code to phase into compliance with Workboat Code Edition 3 over a longer period of time.

2.3 A “new vessel” is defined in the Code as “a vessel, the keel of which was laid, or the construction or lay-up was started, on or after the first day on which this revised Code came into force, or any vessel where there has not been a valid certificate for the previous five years.” An existing vessel is defined as “a vessel which is not a new vessel.”

2.4 The transitional requirements for existing vessels are outlined in the table in Appendix 9 of the Code. Such vessels may continue operating in compliance with the previous standards until the date or examination shown, after which they shall comply in full with the requirements set out in the Workboat Code Edition 3.

2.5 Workboat Code Edition 3 has been developed in consultation with an industry working group. It includes updates necessary as a response to accidents relevant to the workboat industry and incorporates those amendments which have taken place in the relevant international conventions².

¹ SI 1998 No. 1609, as amended by SI 2006 No. 2055, SI 2013 No. 1785, SI 2015 No. 0782 and SI 2016 No. 0354

² Relevant international conventions include the International Convention for the Safety of Life At Sea (SOLAS), which incorporates the International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) Code; the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC); The International Convention on Load Lines; and, The International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL).

2.6 Other flag states, who wish to apply Workboat Code Edition 3 according to their own requirements and laws, may take full advantage of its availability.

3. Further Information on the Code

3.1 Further information on the contents of this Notice can be obtained from the address at the end of this Notice. The text of Workboat Code Edition 3 can be found at:

Insert gov.uk web address here

More information

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Please note that all addresses and telephone numbers are correct at time of publishing.

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Document control sheet

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Page title	<i>Should generally match exactly the notice title above</i>
Page summary (160 characters only)	<i>Short summary of notice contents topic or coverage. Front-load with information to help readers and search engine results, try to avoid duplicating wording in title or details. Distinct from the notice summary, does not need to match.</i>
Details	<p><i>Further context, include target audience information from beginning notice:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Notice to all [insert audience, e.g. shipowners, masters, etc]</i> - <i>This notice should be read with... and/or replaces...</i> - <i>This MIN expires Day Month Year</i>

Document control

Version Number	Status / Change	Date	Author / Reviewer	Content Approver	Next Review Date / Expiry Date
1.0	<p><i>If this is the first issue of the document, briefly summarise the content in a couple of sentences. For versions, use this box to list the key changes that have been made in this version.</i></p> <p><i>For new notice amendments please treat these as separate records and save as a new document.</i></p>	Month Year		Approved by:	<i>Review Date or Expiry Date if applicable, delete heading as appropriate.</i>

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