

# 32 SHIPS SERVING OFFSHORE RENEWABLES INSTALLATIONS

## 32.1 General

**32.1.1** This chapter considers good practice on vessels supporting the construction, operation and maintenance of offshore renewable energy installations (OREIs). Vessels are needed for survey work, transporting components and materials, transfer of personnel, construction work, dive support and accommodation.

**32.1.2** Guidance on operation of vessels transiting in the vicinity of OREIs is published in MGN 372(M+F).

*MGN 372(M+F)*

**32.1.3** Safety for diving operations is subject to HSE regulation and to the Merchant Shipping (Diving Safety) Regulations 2002 and MSN 1762(M+F).

*S.I. 2002/1587*

*MSN 1762(M+F)*

## 32.2 Responsibility for offshore renewables personnel

**32.2.1** While the vessel provider may be a contractor with duties under Construction Design and Management Regulations 2015, this does not in any way compromise the vessel master's duty to ensure the safety of the vessel, crew and passengers.

*S.I. 2015/51*

**32.2.2** Those employed in the development, construction and maintenance of offshore windfarms may not have much experience of working in a maritime environment. Their employer has a responsibility to ensure that they receive the information, instruction, training and supervision necessary to safeguard their health and safety. The master of the vessel should also make certain that the personnel carried are familiar with emergency procedures on board, and give appropriate instructions and guidance to ensure that they are aware of the vessel's working practices in so far as they affect them.

## 32.3 Coordination

32.3.1 It is likely that a large number of organisations will be involved during both the construction and ongoing operation of OREIs. Coordination is therefore key. Each OREI should have arrangements in place for the:

- provision of vessel traffic information and advice to masters;
- management and coordination of all site work/activities; and
- emergency response – see section 32.6.

32.3.2 Any marine operations within the area should be approved through the marine coordination arrangements that are already in place. Clear lines of responsibility and reporting should be established.

32.3.3 In addition, when planning work activities that involve more than one vessel or a vessel and an installation, it is important to identify any differences in their safety procedures, carry out a risk assessment and agree actions in advance that are clearly understood by all.

32.3.4 Vessels often work in close proximity to turbines or other structures, and to other vessels. Even where activities do not directly involve working together with other vessels/installations, a risk assessment should consider the impact of each vessel's activities on others. Where necessary, a sequence of actions and safe procedures should be agreed before the work starts.

## 32.4 Safe means of access to installations

32.4.1 Guidance on safe means of access is in Chapter 22, and the guidance for special circumstances in section 22.9 is particularly relevant.

32.4.2 Where passengers/industrial personnel or crew are accessing or leaving installations from a vessel, a risk assessment of the transfer arrangements should be undertaken and appropriate safety measures put into place to ensure the safety of those involved. Additional safety precautions should be taken during the hours of darkness. The arrangements during transfer must be compatible with the specific offshore installation and the operating company's safety management system and comply with the statutory standards for work at height regulations. The vessel should be properly equipped and/or modified (taking into account the design of the access point on the installation) to allow the transfer to be

undertaken without unnecessary risk. A proper embarkation point should be provided and the boarding procedure clearly agreed.

[Insert reference at para 32.4; IMCA M202 Means of Access to Installations](#)

*S.I. 2005/735*

*S.I. 2007/114*

[32.4.232.4.3](#) The relative movements of the vessels in varying sea, tide and swell conditions make the judgement of when to effect a transfer crucial. The master responsible for the transfer operation should have full and direct sight of the area of transfer. In addition, the master and at least one designated crew member should be able to communicate at all times with the person making the transfer. It is recommended that vessels undertaking ship-to-ship transfers while under way should carry equipment designed to aid in the rapid recovery of a casualty from the waters.

[32.4.332.4.4](#) Those transferring and those working on exposed decks during transfer should wear a personal flotation device. Consideration should be given to requiring an immersion/survival suit to be worn, particularly in cold conditions. The transfer of baggage or other items should be carried out by the crews of the vessels and not by those transferring.

Further guidance on the transfer of personnel to and from offshore vessels and structures can be obtained from the International Marine Contractors Association (IMCA).

## 32.5 Carriage and transfer of dangerous cargoes

[32.5.1](#) Where a workboat carries more than 30 kg or 30 litres net total quantity of dangerous goods, whether used on board for its own purposes or used by the industrial personnel for their own work, the vessel generally requires a Document of Compliance to Carry Dangerous Goods (DoC DG). This is issued by the MCA, and the master and persons ashore responsible for allocating stores/equipment to be carried should receive training in the requirements of the IMDG code. MGN 497(M+F) gives guidance on the storage of dangerous cargoes on board. For detailed requirements that should be complied with, refer to: MGN 280(M); the Workboat Code, Industry Working Group Technical Standard; or the Workboat Code, Edition 2.

MGN 280(M)

MGN 497(M+F)

## 32.6 Emergency response plans

32.6.1 OREI operators should have in place an Emergency Response Cooperation Plan agreed with MCA SAR Operations for the construction, operation and decommissioning phases of any OREI. These plans are designed to ensure that HM Coastguard (HMCG) and SAR resources have information about the fundamental details of an OREI and that both the developer/operator and HMCG have access to emergency contact numbers to permit rapid contact, information sharing and effective cooperation during an emergency situation. This will ensure that incidents arising on the site are effectively managed. Those operating vessels in the area may be required to take part in testing of the arrangements. The master should ensure that all seafarers on the vessel are familiar with the plan, and comply where appropriate with the arrangements set out.

## 32.7 Other sources of information

32.7.1 Further industry guidance is available (see Appendix 2).