



Maritime &
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Agency

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Your ref:
Our ref:

18 September 2015

Dear Consultee

STATUTORY CONSULTATION – THE PROPOSED HOVERCRAFT CODE

This consultation seeks your views on the proposed Hovercraft Code. This Code is a non-statutory equivalent safety standard for small hovercraft wishing to operate in UK waters only, and will be applicable by way of an exemption to the existing international requirements.

All UK hovercraft are currently built to the overlapping regimes of the Hovercraft (General) Order 1972 and the High Speed Craft (HSC) Code. The Hovercraft (General) Order 1972 came into force 15 years prior to any international legislation for these craft. Hovercraft were not considered to be ships at that time, as defined in the Merchant Shipping Act, and therefore outside of the normal regime of ships.

The HSC Code, introduced in 1996 under the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), is an international standard for any vessels operating at speed irrespective of size and applies to all HSC operating internationally, including hovercraft. This international standard was brought into force in the UK by the Merchant Shipping (High Speed Craft) Regulations 2004. At the time there were no national standards for domestically operating HSC therefore it was considered appropriate to extend these standards to all UK domestic HSC.

The design, construction and operational standards in the HSC Code are suited to the relatively large, expensive HSC such as the fast cat ferries operating between the

UK and France, Ireland and the Channel Islands. They are also considered appropriate for the large hovercraft and fast cats such as those operating between mainland UK and the Isle of Wight. These HSC are over 24 metres in length and carry over 12 passengers. However UK manufacturers have found it impractical to build smaller hovercraft, which also operate at high speeds, to these international standards.

The first draft of the proposed Hovercraft Code was written by the Hovercraft Manufacturers Association and Griffon Hoverwork, who have remained heavily involved in the subsequent development of it. The Code is designed to provide all the information for the design, construction and operation of small hovercraft in one consolidated document - a 'one-stop shop'.

Actions for Consultees

The consultation seeks comments on:

1. The proposed Hovercraft Code.
2. The initial assessment of the Costs and Benefits of the impacts of the Code in the Regulatory Triage Assessment. In particular, I would be grateful for any information you can provide to help us to estimate:
 - a. The current annual sales, before implementation of the Hovercraft Code, of small hovercraft by UK manufacturers?
 - b. The current annual exports, before implementation of the Hovercraft Code, of small hovercraft by UK manufacturers?
 - c. The potential increase in sales of small hovercraft by UK manufacturers, following the implementation of the Hovercraft Code?
 - d. The potential increase in exports of small hovercraft by UK manufacturers', following the implementation of the Hovercraft Code?

This is a 4 week consultation running from 18 September to 18 October 2015. Please provide any comments and feedback to Alison Leighton (Alison.Leighton@mcga.gov.uk) at the above address **by 18 October 2015**.

The consultation is available on-line at www.gov.uk > consultations > Maritime and Coastguard Agency.

A list of consultees is attached at Annex A, hard copies are available on request. If you know of anyone else who should be notified of this consultation, please let me know.

Freedom of Information Act

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004).

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that under the FOIA, there is a statutory Code of Practice with which public authorities must comply and which deals with, amongst other things, with obligations of confidence. In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

The Department will process your personal data in accordance with the DPA and in the majority of circumstances; this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties.

Consultation Criteria

This consultation has been conducted in accordance with the [Cabinet Office Consultation Principles Guidance](#).

Feedback

If you have any comments regarding the conduct of this consultation please contact the Consultation Co-ordinator at consultation.coordinator@mcga.gov.uk. We are continually trying to improve the way in which we conduct consultations and appreciate your views, so we would also be grateful if you could complete and return the attached feedback form, Annex B. These should be submitted to the Consultation Co-ordinator and are not affected by the deadline for this consultation.

Alison Leighton
Deputy Legal Services Manager

Annex A

List of Consultees

Airspeed Hovercraft Solution Limited
American Bureau of Shipping
BBV Hovercraft
Bristol Channel Skimmers
British Hovercraft Company Limited
British Marine
Burness Corlett Three Quays (Southampton) Limited
Class NK
Det Nord Veritas – Germanischer Lloyd
Ecospan
Fox Associates
Griffon Hovercraft
High Cross Hovercraft Limited
Hovercraft Club GB
Hovercraft Cruising Club
Hovercraft Manufacturers Association
Hovercraft Services
Hovercraft Society
Hover Force
Hoverlink Limited
Hovtek
International Institute of Marine Surveying
Intertidal
Ivanoff Hovercraft
Lloyds Register
Maritime Services International
MECAL
Northwest Hovercraft
Peel Ports
Port of London Authority
Registro Italiano Navale
Royal Institution of Naval Architects
Royal National Lifeboat Institute
Royal Yachting Association
Seafish Industry Authority
Society of Consulting Marine Engineers and Ship Surveyors
Vortex Services (Hovercraft) Limited
Yacht Designers and Surveyors Association
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
Department for Transport
Health and Safety Executive
Ministry of Defence

Annex B

MCA CONSULTATION FEEDBACK FORM

1. Please indicate on which Consultation you are providing feedback:

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| |
|--|

2a. Please indicate whether you are responding on behalf of:

Please cross one box

| | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Yourselves as an Individual | <input type="checkbox"/> | A Trade Association | <input type="checkbox"/> | A Company | <input type="checkbox"/> | A Government Organisation | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| A Trade Union | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (please specify) | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | |

2b. Please indicate whether you accessed this consultation package through:

Please cross one box

| | | | | | |
|------|--------------------------|-------|--------------------------|---------|--------------------------|
| Post | <input type="checkbox"/> | Email | <input type="checkbox"/> | Website | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|------|--------------------------|-------|--------------------------|---------|--------------------------|

3. Please rate the quality of this consultation regarding accuracy, good English and spelling:

Please cross one box

| | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Very good | Good | Average | Poor | Very Poor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

4. Please rate the format of the consultation presentation (layout, Annexes etc):

Please cross one box

| | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Very good | Good | Average | Poor | Very Poor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

5. Please rate the consultation in terms of how clear and concise you felt it was:

Please cross one box

| | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Very good | Good | Average | Poor | Very Poor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

6. Did you feel that the consultation was conducted over a sufficient period of time?

YES NO

7. Were any representative groups, organisations or companies not consulted who you felt should have been?

YES

NO

If YES,
who?

8. Please let us have any suggestions for improvement or other comments you wish to make about this consultation below:

Thank you for your time. Please return this form to:

Consultation Coordinator
Office of the Chief Executive
Maritime and Coastguard Agency
Bay 3/29, Spring Place
105 Commercial Rd
Southampton
SO15 1EG

Tel: +44 (0) 2380 329469

Fax: +44 (0) 2380 329105

Email: consultation.coordinator@mcga.gov.uk

If you are happy to supply your name in case we need to contact you to discuss your views further, please enter it below (this is optional and your feedback will still be taken into account if you wish to remain anonymous):

Name:

Tel No:

Please note that the deadline for responses to the Consultation itself does not apply to the return of this form.