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## Harmonised System of Survey and Certification (HSSC)

**Notice to all Shipowners, Ship Operators, Masters and Officers of Merchant Ships, Certifying Authorities and Surveyors.**

*This notice replaces M963 and M1612*

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This Merchant Shipping Notice provides background and necessary detail to accompany the Merchant Shipping (Survey and Certification) Regulations 2015.

The above regulations implement the Protocol of 1988 relating to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea 1974, which harmonises the periods of validity and intervals between surveys for the nine main convention certificates. These are listed in the attached Annex.

There is a new provision for a certificate known as the Cargo Ship Safety Certificate which may be issued as an alternative to the three existing cargo ship safety certificates, namely Cargo Ship Safety Construction, Cargo Ship Safety Equipment and Cargo Ship Safety Radio.

### 1. Introduction / Background

- 1.1 The Merchant Shipping (Survey and Certification) Regulations 2015 apply the Harmonised System of Survey and Certification in the UK. The 1988 SOLAS and Load Lines Protocols formally entered into force internationally on 3 February 2000, together with amendments to MARPOL 73/78 and the International Bulk Chemical (IBC) Code, International Gas Carrier (IGC) Code, Bulk Chemicals (BCH) Code, and Gas Carrier (GC) Code. The United Kingdom ratified both Protocols on 8 March 2000 with implementing legislation coming into force three months later.
- 1.2 The Harmonised System of Survey and Certification (HSSC) seeks to standardise the period of validity and the intervals between surveys for the nine main convention certificates to a maximum period of validity for all certificates except a passenger ship safety certificate to five years. In so doing it aims to simplify the survey and certification process. Following a period of transition, the streamlined format of the HSSC will bring benefits to the industry in terms of flexibility of survey schedule, reduced numbers of surveyors, survey time and paperwork, all therefore reducing costs.



## 2. Survey Types

2.1 Under the HSSC, there are seven types of survey:

- a) Initial Survey.
- b) Renewal Survey.
- c) Periodical Survey.
- d) Intermediate Survey.
- e) Annual Survey.
- f) Inspection of the Outside of the Ships Bottom.
- g) Additional Survey.

## 3. SCOPE OF SURVEYS

### 3.1 Passenger Ships

3.1.1 An **initial** survey of a passenger ship shall consist of a complete inspection of the ship's structure, machinery and equipment, including the outside of the ship's bottom and the inside and outside of the boilers, such as to ensure that the arrangements, materials and scantlings of the structure, boilers and other pressure vessels and their appurtenances, main and auxiliary machinery, electrical installation, radio installations including those used in life-saving appliances, fire protection, fire safety systems and appliances, life-saving appliances and arrangements, shipborne navigational equipment, nautical publications, means of embarkation for pilots, lights, shapes, means of making sound and distress signals and other equipment fully comply with the requirements of the relevant regulations, and that the workmanship of all parts of the ship and its equipment is in all respects satisfactory.

3.1.2 A **renewal** survey of a passenger ship shall include an inspection of the structure, boilers and other pressure vessels, machinery and equipment, including the outside of the ship's bottom, such as to ensure that the arrangements, materials and scantlings of the structure, boilers and other pressure vessels and their appurtenances, main and auxiliary machinery, electrical installation, radio installations including those used in life-saving appliances, fire protection, fire safety systems and appliances, life-saving appliances and arrangements, shipborne navigational equipment, nautical publications, means of embarkation for pilots, lights, shapes, means of making sound and distress signals and other equipment are in satisfactory condition and is fit for the service for which it is intended, and fully complies with the requirements of the relevant regulations.

3.1.3 An **additional** survey, either general or partial, according to the circumstances, shall be made following a repair or renewal. The survey shall be such as to ensure that the necessary repairs or renewals have been effectively carried out, that the material and workmanship are in all respects satisfactory, and that the ship complies with the provisions of the relevant regulations.

### 3.2 Cargo Ships

#### 3.2.1 Cargo Ship Safety Equipment

An **initial** survey of cargo ship safety equipment shall include an inspection of the fire safety systems and appliances, life-saving appliances and arrangements except radio installations, the shipborne navigational equipment, means of embarkation for pilots and other equipment to which Chapters II-1, II-2, III and V of the 1974 SOLAS Convention apply, to ensure that they comply with the requirements of the relevant regulations, and they are in satisfactory condition



and are fit for the service for which the ship is intended. In addition the fire control plans, nautical publications, lights, shapes, means of making sound signals and distress signals shall also be subject to this survey.

An **annual** survey shall include a general inspection of the equipment referred to above to ensure that it has been maintained to conform with the provisions of the relevant regulations to ensure that the ship in all respects will remain fit to proceed to sea without danger to the ship or persons on board and that it remains satisfactory for the service for which the ship is intended.

A **renewal** survey and a **periodical** survey shall include an inspection of the equipment referred to in the initial survey to ensure that it complies with the relevant requirements of the relevant regulations, is in satisfactory condition and is fit for the service for which the ship is intended.

### 3.2.2 Cargo ship radio installations

An **initial** survey of cargo ship radio installation equipment shall include a complete inspection of the radio installations of cargo ships, including those used in life-saving appliances, to ensure that they comply with the requirements of the relevant regulations.

A **renewal** survey and a **periodical** survey will include an inspection of the radio installations of cargo ships, including those used in life-saving appliances, to ensure that they comply with the requirements of the relevant regulations.

### 3.2.3 Cargo ship structure, machinery and equipment

An **initial** survey shall include a complete inspection of the structure, machinery and equipment, including an inspection of the outside of the ship's bottom, before the ship enters service. The survey shall be such as to ensure that the arrangements, materials, scantling and workmanship of the structure, boilers and other pressure vessels, their appurtenances, main and auxiliary machinery including steering gear and associated control systems, electrical installation and other equipment, and in the case of tankers, the pump-rooms, cargo, bunker and ventilation piping systems and associated safety devices comply with the requirements of the relevant regulations, are in satisfactory condition and are fit for the service for which the ship is intended and that the required stability information is provided. In the case of tankers such a survey shall also include an inspection of the pump-rooms, cargo, bunker and ventilation piping systems and associated safety devices.

A **renewal** survey will include an inspection of the ship's structure, machinery and equipment such as to ensure that they comply with the requirements of the relevant regulations, are in satisfactory condition and are fit for the service for which they are intended.

An **intermediate** survey will include an inspection of the structure, boilers and other pressure vessels, machinery and equipment, the steering gear and the associated control systems and electrical installations, and in the case of tankers, the pump-rooms, cargo, bunker and ventilation piping systems and associated safety devices and the testing of insulation resistance of electrical installations in dangerous zones to ensure that they remain satisfactory for the service for which the ship is intended.

An **annual** survey will include a general inspection of the structure, machinery and equipment referred to above to ensure that they have been maintained to conform with the provisions of the relevant regulations to ensure that the ship in all respects will remain fit to proceed to sea without danger to the ship or persons on board, and that they remain satisfactory for the service for which the ship is intended.



### 3.2.4 Inspection of the outside of the ship's bottom

The inspection of the outside of the ship's bottom is a separate survey.

#### (i) Passenger ships

For passenger ships the inspection is required every year. On the years in which the out of water inspection does not take place, an in water inspection of the ship's bottom shall be carried out. As a minimum, two of these surveys in any five year period, at intervals not exceeding 36 months, shall be conducted with the ship out of the water.

#### (ii) Cargo ships

For cargo ships there shall be a minimum of two inspections during any five year period at intervals not exceeding 36 months. Inspections should normally be carried out with the ship out of the water, however consideration may be given to alternate inspections being carried out with the ship afloat.

## 4. Outline of HSSC

4.1 The main points of the Harmonised System of Survey and Certification (see Annex for a diagrammatic overview) are as follows:

- a) The maximum period of validity of all certificates except the passenger ship safety certificate is five years. The passenger ship safety certificate shall be renewed annually.
- b) Each full term of five years (or one year) will follow directly on from the previous one (unless a ship is laid up or undergoing major repairs); each certificate will be dated from the expiry date of the previous one.
- c) In order to provide the necessary flexibility, the renewal survey may be carried out up to three months before the expiry of the existing certificate. The new certificate will still be dated from the expiry date of the old certificate.
- d) A certificate may also be extended by a period of up to three months (or for ships engaged on short voyages there is a period of grace of one month) in order that the renewal survey may be carried out. However, the new certificate will still be dated from the expiry date of the old certificate before the extension was granted.
- e) Where a renewal survey has been completed and a certificate cannot be issued or placed aboard the ship before the expiry date of the existing certificate, the existing certificate may be endorsed and shall be accepted as the new certificate for a period of up to five months from the expiry date.
- f) A certificate (other than a passenger certificate) that has been issued initially for a period of less than five years may be extended to the maximum period of five years provided that the minimum pattern of surveys is maintained.
- g) Every certificate will be subject to an Annual, Intermediate or Periodical survey each year within three months of its anniversary date (the day and month of each year corresponding to the date of expiry) as follows:
  - (i) The Passenger Certificate (PC) requires a Renewal survey each year.
  - (ii) The Cargo Ship Safety Radio Certificate (RADIO) requires a Periodical survey each year.
  - (iii) The International Load Line Certificate (LOADLINE) requires an Annual survey each year.
  - (iv) The Cargo Ship Safety Equipment Certificate (SEC) requires an Annual survey every year. On either the second or third year this is replaced with a Periodical survey.



- (v) The Cargo Ship Safety Construction Certificate (SAFCON), the International Certificate of Fitness for the Carriage of Liquefied Gases in Bulk (IGC/GC), the International Certificate of Fitness for the Carriage of Dangerous Chemicals in Bulk (IBC/BCH), the International Oil Pollution Prevention Certificate (IOPPC) and the International Pollution Prevention Certificate for the Carriage of Noxious Liquid Substances in Bulk all require Annual surveys each year. On either the second or third year this is replaced with an Intermediate survey.

(h) If an Annual, Intermediate or Periodical Survey is completed more than three months before the anniversary date, the anniversary date may be amended to suit and the expiry date of the certificate brought forward by a corresponding period or, if the expiry date is to remain unchanged, additional surveys, as appropriate, carried out so that the pattern of surveys remains the same and the maximum intervals between the various types of surveys are not exceeded.

(i) A new Cargo Ship Safety Certificate (CSSC), which includes provision for recording all the surveys required for the Cargo Ship Safety Equipment Certificate, the Cargo Ship Safety Radio Certificate and the Cargo Ship Safety Construction Certificate, may be issued as an alternative to the existing cargo ship safety certificates. The Certifying Authority should ensure that they have in their possession declarations of satisfactory radio survey before the issue of the CSSC.

(j) In general the UK will model its instructions for guidance of surveyors on the Survey Guidelines under the Harmonised System of Survey and Certification (IMO Resolution A.1053 (27)).

## 5. Relevant UK Legislation

2015/****	MS (Survey and Certification) Regulations;
1994/2464	MS (Gas Carriers) Regulations (as amended)
1996/3010	MS (Dangerous or Noxious Liquid Substances in Bulk) Regulations (as amended)
1968/1053	MS (Load Line) Rules (as amended)
1996/2154	MS (Prevention of Oil Pollution) Regulations (as amended)

## More Information

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