



The Code of Practice for the Construction and Use of 15m to less than 24m Fishing Vessels – Standards which can be used to prepare for your MCA Survey and Inspection

Notice to all Designers, Builders, Owners, Employers, Skippers and Crew of Fishing Vessels

This note should be read with the Fishing Vessels (Safety of 15-24 Metre Vessels) Regulations 2002 (SI. 2002/2201) and MSN 1770, The Code of Safe Working Practice for the Construction and Use of 15m Length Overall to less than 24m Registered Length Vessels.

Summary

This Note provides a Code of Practice for the Construction and Use of 15m Length Overall (LOA) to less than 24m Registered Length (L) Vessels based on MSN 1770, but revised taking into account MAIB findings and investigations into incidents. This Code is voluntary but may be used as an alternative to MSN 1770 for the purposes of having your vessel surveyed and inspected. MSN 1770 remains in force.

The main changes to the Code are as follows:

- Structural modifications to be notified to MCA prior to work taking place;
- Shore power for when crew are living on board whilst in port with fire detection and safety systems operable from shore power;
- Personal Floatation Devices or Lifelines recommended to be worn whilst working on open decks;

A new Annex 4 which replicates the requirements of the Fishing Vessel (Safety Provisions) Rules 1975 that “existing vessels” need to comply with.

The Code also clarifies that EPIRBs should be capable of transmitting the position obtained from a built-in GPS receiver to a satellite.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Marine Guidance Note is intended to allow owners and skippers to improve the safety of their vessels by complying with a revised but non mandatory 15-24m Fishing Vessel Code of Practice.



2.0 Background

2.1 This Code is associated with the Fishing Vessels (Safety of 15-24 Metre Vessels) Regulations 2002.

2.2 The Regulations came into force on 23rd November 2002 and gave statutory force to MSN 1770 (F) - The Code of Safe Working Practice for the Construction and Use of 15m Length Overall (LOA) to less than 24m Registered Length (L) Vessels

3.0 The Revised Code

3.1 The Code contained within this MGN sets out the full text of the proposed revision to the current Code as set out in MSN 1770. The existing Code of Practice remains the Code which applies to these vessels but owners and skippers may make use of this Code to prepare for their mandatory surveys and inspections and compliance with this Code will be treated as demonstrating compliance with the Regulations and MSN 1770.

3.2 The Code has been subject to a review by MCA, industry and other interested bodies and this Note and the revised Code have been developed as a result of that review. The aim of the review is to update existing requirements in order to improve the safety of fishing vessels in foreseeable operating conditions, and the survival of the crew in the event of an accident.

3.3 It is the intention of the MCA to issue this Code as a Merchant Shipping Notice, subject to a formal consultation process, with the aim of making these requirements mandatory.

4.0 Changes applied to the revised Code

4.1 Based on recommendations from the MAIB and investigations of past accidents the Code requires that extensive repairs, modifications or alterations carried out to the structure or machinery of a vessel, shall only be undertaken after consultation and with the MCA's approval to ensure it complies with the requirements of the Code, as applicable to a new vessel, to the satisfaction of the MCA.

4.2 Due to the numbers of fishermen that have died after falling overboard, the Code also recommends that all crew whilst working on the open deck of a vessel that is underway wear a personal floatation device or a safety harness. This is not a mandatory requirement. Attention is also drawn to The Merchant Shipping and Fishing Vessels (Personal Protective Equipment) Regulations 1999 which set out the general rule that Personal Protective Equipment must be used when risks cannot be avoided or reduced to an acceptable level. MSN 1731 (The Merchant Shipping and Fishing Vessels Personal Protective Equipment Regulations 1999) says that for any work where there is reasonable foreseeable risk of going overboard then a lifejacket or Personal Floatation Device should be worn.

4.3 There is also a requirement for shore power when crew are living on board whilst in port and must be able to have fire detection and safety systems operable from shore power.

4.4 "Existing Vessels" as defined in the Code should comply with this Code, including Annex 4.

4.5 The Code also clarifies that EPIRBs should be capable of transmitting the position obtained from a built-in GPS receiver to a satellite.



5.0 Vessel Owners Responsibility

5.1 To comply with the Code, vessel owners will be required to:

- to meet the requirements for the construction and use of fishing vessels as set out in the Code;
- complete the annual self-certification in the form laid out in Annex 2 of the Code;
- present new vessels for survey during and on completion of construction, or on transfer to the UK Register prior to issue of a UK certificate;
- present the vessel for renewal survey at intervals not exceeding 5 years;
- present the vessel for inspection mid point in the survey cycle;
- to present the vessel for survey prior to completing major repairs or modifications.

More Information

Vessel Standards Branch
Maritime and Coastguard Agency
Bay 2/30
Spring Place
105 Commercial Road
Southampton
SO15 1EG

Tel : +44 (0) 23 8032 9154
Fax : +44 (0) 23 8032 9104
e-mail: fishing@mcga.gov.uk

General Inquiries: info@mcga.gov.uk

Website Address: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/maritime-and-coastguard-agency

File Ref: MS88/5/0018

Published: Printers to Insert [Month Year]
Please note that all addresses and
telephone numbers are correct at time of publishing

© Crown Copyright 2015

Safer Lives, Safer Ships, Cleaner Seas

