



Small Seagoing Passenger Ship Code

Notice to all Shipowners, Operators and Surveyors of new and existing Small Seagoing Passenger Vessels

This notice should be read with The Small Seagoing Passenger Ship Code and the referenced Statutory Instruments.

Summary

This MGN introduces the Maritime and Coastguard Agency's Small Seagoing Passenger Ship Code. Ships that comply with the Code are permitted to operate at night and in winter, and to operate longer distances to sea, than they can as UK passenger ships of classes VI or VI(A).

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Small Seagoing Passenger Ship Code (SSPS Code) enables vessels that meet its standards to operate at the limits set down for EU Class C or D vessels, rather than being limited to the traditional daylight and summer limits of United Kingdom (UK) Class VI or VI(A) vessels.
- 1.2 This means that a vessel can operate on longer coastal voyages provided that at any point it is within 5 miles of the coast and 15 miles from a place of refuge as defined in the code. The vessel can also operate in winter or at night. Compliance with the SSPS Code demonstrates that a sufficient level of safety is achieved to allow the vessel to be exempted from the UK regulations, listed in the Schedule, which otherwise apply. To benefit from these exemptions the vessel must comply fully with the Code and any lapse in Code certification or non-compliance with the Code will invalidate the exemption.

2. Application

- 2.1 The SSPS Code may be voluntarily applied, from the date of entry into force on 1 June 2015, to small UK sea-going passenger ships. The Code applies to ships operating in EC sea areas B (restricted), C or D with not more than 250 passengers, which are not covered by the EC Directive 2009/45 on safety rules and standards for passenger ships, as amended ("the EC Directive"). For the purposes of certification, a vessel complying with the SSPS Code is treated as a Passenger Ship of UK Class II(A) with operating restrictions.



- 2.2 A small passenger ship is one that is of less than 24m in load line length, or of less than 150grt if the ship's keel was laid or was at a similar stage of construction before 21 July 1968, according to the tonnage measurement regulations in force on 20 July 1968.
- 2.3 The EC Directive covers ships built of steel or equivalent material, so the Code applies mainly to ships built of GRP or wood. The Code may however be applied to existing steel vessels of under 24m in length constructed on or before 31 December 2002. The EC Directive also covers High Speed Craft of any material capable of speeds of over 20 knots, but vessels operating at speeds of up to 20 knots may be certified under the Code.
- 2.4 Existing ships built of steel may comply with the EC Directive in full, instead of or in addition to complying with UK class III, VI or VIA requirements in accordance with MSN1811. This would give the same enhanced operating limits and very similar technical requirements.
- 2.5 The new Merchant Shipping (Boat Masters' Qualifications, Crew and Hours of Work) Regulations 2015 permit extended voyages within the "limited coastal area" of 5 miles from the coast and 15 miles from point of departure or of arrival. MSN1853 paragraph 2.5 confirms that a Boat Master's Licence is a suitable qualification for masters of ships operating under the SSPS Code, and regulation 7(2) of the regulations shall be interpreted accordingly.
- 2.6 A seagoing passenger ship certified under the Code may also operate, under the same operating restrictions (if any), in categorised waters.
- 2.7 The SSPS Code may be found at –
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/small-seagoing-passenger-ship-code>

More Information

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GENERAL EXEMPTION

The Secretary of State, in exercise of his powers under the regulations listed in Column 2 of the Schedule, exempts

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from the requirements of such regulations listed in Column 3 of the Schedule as are applicable to them. This exemption is subject to the following conditions –

- (a) that the vessel is surveyed and certified as a passenger vessel in compliance with, and the vessel complies in full with, the Small Seagoing Passenger Ship Code, issued by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, an executive agency of the United Kingdom Department of Transport.
- (b) that the vessel operates only within –
 - (i) categorised waters as defined in Merchant Shipping Notice MSN1837;
 - (ii) sea areas C or D as defined in MSN1747; or
 - (iii) when specifically certified to do so, sea area B as defined in MSN1747 subject to the restrictions of wave height stated in the Passenger Certificate.
- (c) that the vessel operates within any restricted periods defined in the Passenger Certificate.

This exemption has effect from 1 June 2015 and, subject to consultation and reasonable notice, shall remain effective until amended or revoked.

Dated this 1 day of June 2015



Chris Thomas
Director of Maritime Safety and Standards
For the Secretary of State



SCHEDULE

Column 1 Name of Regulation	Column 2 Power to Exempt	Column 3 Regulations Exempted	Column 4 Regulations not exempted
The Merchant Shipping (Passenger Ship Construction: Ships of Classes I, II and II(A)) Regulations 1998 (SI 1998/2514), as amended	Reg 4	Parts II to IX (Regs 6 to 84)	Parts I, X and XI (Regs 1 to 5 and 85 to 93)
The Merchant Shipping (Load Lines) Regulations 1998 (SI 1998/2241) as amended	Reg 5(2)	Parts II to VI (Regs 7 to 33)	Parts I and VII (Regs 1 to 6 and 34 to 37)
The Merchant Shipping (Life Saving Appliances) Regulations 1999 (SI 1999/2721) as amended	Reg 85(3)	Parts II, III and IV (Regs 5 to 82)	Parts I and V (Regs 1 to 4 and 83 to 87)
The Merchant Shipping (Radio Installations) Regulations 1998 (SI 1998/2070) as amended	Reg 5(3)	Parts III and III (Regs 7 to 48)	Parts I and IV (Regs 1 to 6 and 49 to 51)
The Merchant Shipping (Emergency Information for Passengers) Regulations 1990 (SI 1990/0660) as amended	Reg 7	Regs 4 to 6	Regs 1, 2, 3, 7 and 8
The Merchant Shipping (Fire Protection: Large Ships) Regulations 1998 (SI 1998/1012) as amended	Reg 1(8)	Part II, V, VI and IX (Regs 3 to 15, 37 to 68, 102, 103)	Part I, III, IV, VII, VIII and X (Regs 1, 2, 16 to 36, 69 to 101, 104 to 106)
The Merchant Shipping (Fire Protection: Small Ships) Regulations 1998 (SI 1998/1011) as amended	Reg 47	Parts II, V to VII (Regs 3 to 16, 30 to 45)	Parts I, III, IV, and VIII (Regs 1, 2, 17 to 29, 46 to 49)
The Merchant Shipping (Fire Protection) Regulations 2003 (SI 2003/2950), as amended	Reg 6	Reg 5	Regs 1 to 4 and 6 to 9
The Merchant Shipping (Safety of Navigation) Regulations 2002 (SI 2002/1473) as amended	Regs 7 and 8	Regs 5, 6 and 9	Regs 1 to 4, 7, 8 and 10 to 12
The Merchant Shipping (Bridge Visibility)(Small Passenger Ships) Regulations 2005 (SI 2005/2286) as amended	Reg 9(1)(b)	Regs 4 to 8	Regs 1 to 3 and 9 to 11

