



Code of Practice for Fishing Vessels of 24 metres and Over - Standards which may be used to prepare for your MCA Surveys.

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

This notice should be read with The Fishing Vessels (Safety Provisions) Rules 1975 (S.I. 1975/330) as amended; The Fishing Vessels (Life-Saving Appliances) Regulations 1988 (S.I. 1988/38) as amended; and The Fishing Vessels (EC Directive on Harmonised Safety Regime) Regulations 1999 as amended

Summary

This Notice provides a Code of Practice for 24m Registered Length (L) Vessels and Over and sets out in one document the requirements currently contained in the Fishing Vessels (Safety Provisions) Rules 1975, the Fishing Vessels (EC Directive on a Harmonised Safety Regime) Regulations 1999 and the Fishing Vessels (Life-Saving Appliances) Regulations 1988.

This Code is voluntary but may be used as an alternative to these Rules and Regulations, which remain in force, for the purposes of having your vessel surveyed.

In agreement with Industry, the Code contains some additional requirements based on MAIB findings and discussion with Industry. These include measures to:

- prevent flooding or aid its early detection;
- aid man overboard recovery;
- ensure safe provision of shore power;
- reduce the risk of fire;
- aid evacuation of the vessel in an emergency;
- report structural modifications to the MCA prior to work taking place;
- recommend the wearing of Personal Floatation Devices or Lifelines whilst working on the open deck.

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 non mandatory 24m and Over Fishing Vessel Code



of Practice. It is intended that this revision of the Code will become mandatory within two years.

2.0 Background

2.1 Currently, fishing vessels of 24m Registered Length and Over must comply with;

- The Fishing Vessels (Safety Provisions) Rules 1975 (S.I. 1975/330) as amended;
- The Fishing Vessels (Life-Saving Appliances) Regulations 1988 (S.I. 1988/38) as amended; and
- The Fishing Vessels (EC Directive on Harmonised Safety Regime) Regulations 1999 as amended which give effect to the Torremolinos Protocol relating to the Torremolinos International Convention for the safety of Fishing Vessels.

2.2 To assist Industry in complying with the requirements the MCA, with the assistance of the Fishing Industry Safety Group, has developed a single Code which applies to both new and existing vessels and incorporates the requirements currently set out in the various Rules and Regulations referred to above.

2.3 The Code has been subject to a review by MCA, industry and other interested bodies and this Notice and the revised Code have been developed as a result of that review. This Notice represents the final part of a review of the Fishing Vessels (Safety Provisions) Rules 1975 and other legislation applicable to fishing vessels. 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.

3.0 The Revised Code

3.1 This Code is not mandatory and the existing Rules and Regulations remain in force. It is intended that this revision of the Code will become mandatory within two years. However, vessels may make use of this Code to prepare for their mandatory surveys and compliance with this Code will be treated as being compliant with the current mandatory requirements.

4.0 Changes applied to the revised Code

4.1 The Code also introduces some new requirements. These are based on either recommendations from the MAIB, investigations of past accidents or suggestions from the Fishing Industry Safety Group.

The new requirements are:

- All vessels shall have emergency lighting fitted to all exits to allow emergency exit in event of lighting failure.
- All vessels, built as follows, shall have a lightning protection system:
 - Ships with wooden hulls
 - Ships with metal hull with wooden masts
- Vessels arranged to have an electrical supply from a shore or other external supply should be fitted with a suitable connection box having an inlet socket or terminals



suitably rated for the supply. The Code sets out how to ensure shore power is supplied safely.

- High level alarm was required, in the propulsion machinery spaces and fish holds, be fitted with at least two bilge level sensors (one high and one low level) capable of indicating water ingress in those spaces at the control station by means of visual and audible alarm. Previously only a high level alarm was required
- Any unmanned spaces in all vessels, where ingress of water would seriously affect stability or essential equipment e.g. sonar rooms, no less than one bilge alarm is required. In all vessels, any auto-start bilge pump serving a clean compartment must be fitted with an audible and visual alarm at the control position(s) so that the reason for pumping may be investigated.
- In all vessels the Code will require each dry compartment provided with a bilge suction capability (built-in or portable) must be fitted with a bilge level alarm if the level of bilge water can not be readily checked visually without entering the compartment. Alternatively, spring loaded drain valves may be fitted outside the compartment as a means of checking the bilge level.
- In all vessels where the distance from sea level to the point of access to, or egress from, the vessel exceeds 9 metres and when it is intended to embark and disembark pilots by means of the accommodation ladder, or other equally safe and convenient means in conjunction with a pilot ladder, the vessel shall carry such equipment on each side.
- All vessels are now required to have:
 - two man-ropes of not less than 28 millimetres in diameter, properly secured to the vessel, if required by the pilot;
 - a lifebuoy equipped with a self-igniting light; and
 - a heaving line.
- All refrigerators must now contain thermometers.

4.2 The Code also recommends 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.

4.3 Due to the numbers of fishermen that have died after falling overboard, the Code also proposes that all crew whilst working on the open deck of a vessel that is underway should wear a personal floatation device or a safety harness. 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."



More Information

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