



FISHING VESSELS: Registration Surveys for Fishing Vessels of less 15m built before 16 July 2007

Notice to all Designers, Builders, Certifying Authorities, Classification Societies, Agents, Brokers, Owners, Employers, Skippers and Crew of Fishing Vessels

This notice should be read with in conjunction with MSN 1871 (F)

Summary

MSN 1871 allows vessels of less than 15m built before 16 July 2007 to be considered by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) for Registration as fishing vessels. As part of the process MCA requires evidence that such vessels are safe and suitable for commercial fishing.

Since 2007, this evidence has been provided to the MCA by Seafish, whose surveyors (at the vessel owner's expense) survey such vessels against Seafish Construction Standards and submit their report to the MCA for consideration.

Seafish ceased undertaking these surveys on 1 December 2017. MCA now oversees these surveys, which are conducted by Authorised Surveyors on behalf of the MCA. This Notice sets out the processes now in place to deal with vessels wishing to Register as fishing vessels.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Fishing is a dangerous industry with the rate of fatalities being approximately 100 times higher than that of the UK's general workforce. The Small Fishing Vessel Code of Practice requires that vessels must meet a minimum standard of construction and outfit, if they wish to become a fishing vessel.
- 1.2 MCA does not publish its own standards for hull, machinery, control or electrical installations for fishing vessels but, in accordance with MSN 1871, requires that all vessels built on or after 16 July 2007 must be constructed, surveyed and certificated to the approved Fishing Vessel Construction Standards of Certifying Authorities or the Construction Rules of the United Kingdom (UK) authorised Classification Societies (Class) as equivalent construction standards for fishing vessels



- 1.3 MSN 1871 allows vessels built before 16 July 2007 to be registered as commercial fishing vessels provided that applicants can demonstrate that the construction standard and condition of the vessel is satisfactory. This requirement was previously supported by Seafish, whose surveyors completed a registration survey which assessed the vessel's structure and, in the case of vessels of 7m and over their outfit, against the current Seafish Fishing Vessels Construction and Outfit Standards. MCA then examined the Seafish Comparison Report and either allowed registration, (sometimes after requiring the applicant to address any areas of concern deemed necessary), or refused registration. Seafish ceased providing Registration Surveys and Comparison Reports for existing vessels (built before 16 July 2007 or not originally built to Seafish Construction and Outfit Standards), on 1 December 2017.
- 1.4 This system was designed to ensure that vessels are suitable for commercial fishing and comply with an appropriate standard and that there will not be any technical or commercial advantage from potential owners adopting a lesser standard.

2 Policy

- 2.1 From 1 December 2017, to ensure that vessels continue to comply with a suitable standard and do not gain any technical or commercial advantage, new arrangements have been put in place. Vessels which are not currently registered as fishing vessels and which are verified as being built before 16 July 2007, and which seek to register as such, will continue to be surveyed, as far as is practicable, in comparison with the requirements of the Seafish Construction Standards, and the Registration Survey Comparison Report will be supplied direct to the MCA for consideration.
- 2.2 Before purchasing a vessel the potential applicant is recommended to assess the vessel using the Matrix at Annex 1. This matrix is a guide only. If you identify a vessel you wish to purchase, you can use the matrix to calculate a points score for the vessel before you make a purchase. This matrix gives an indication of the construction standard of the vessel. The lower the number of points your vessel scores more likely it is to be registered as meeting the necessary standard.
- 2.3 Please note the Matrix is **NOT** used by the MCA as part of the process of considering the vessel for Registration, the decision of the MCA is based solely upon the Registration Survey Comparison Report. The purpose of the Registration Survey Comparison Report is to establish that the vessels construction standard is equivalent to the Seafish Construction Standards and that it has been adequately maintained over time. The Matrix is therefore not a guarantee of either refusal or acceptance for Registration, it is solely for the potential purchaser to use as a guide to choosing a vessel.
- 2.4 Fishing vessels which leave the Register for a period of six months or more will be treated as new registrations and it will be necessary to confirm compliance with the applicable standards as set out in this MGN, as far as this is practicable, before these vessels can be re-registered and re-certificated by the MCA.
- 2.5 Seafish will continue to undertake condition/compliance surveys for any such vessels that were constructed to Seafish standards.



- 2.6 Once the applicant has identified a vessel they wish to Register, they should identify a suitable Authorised Surveyor from a list available at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/fishing-vessel-classification-registration-and-inspection> or by calling 0203 81 72452. The applicant should then contact the Authorised Surveyor to arrange a survey.
- 2.7 Wooden hulls sheathed in GRP will not be accepted for Registration.
- 2.8 The applicant (e.g. owner or builder) will be responsible for all costs associated with work undertaken to demonstrate compliance with the relevant construction and outfitting standards. Under the previous system the fees for the Registration Survey were set by Seafish. Surveyors now authorised by MCA set their own fees to conduct this Survey and complete the Report.
- 2.9 When presenting the vessel for a survey, a number of Conditions must be complied with. These include, but may not be limited to:
- The vessel is to be presented in a complete and operational state.
 - Work or operations are not to be in progress during the survey unless
 - Requested (e.g. bilge alarms, hydraulic emergency stops etc.).
 - The vessel is to be out of water. This can include:
 - On a slip way
 - Hard standing
 - On a trailer
 - On the beach (providing a reasonable survey of the hull is possible)
 - Safe access is to be provided by the applicant or their representative.
 - Prior to survey bilges are to be empty and clean.
 - Prior to survey stores and equipment are to be removed from all areas restricting access to the internal hull structure.
 - Prior to survey and where possible, linings are to be removed for access to the hull structure.
 - Where ultrasonic tests are required (aluminium & steel vessels) the applicant or their representative is to provide adequate and safe means of access around the whole external perimeter of the vessel, including the provision of adequate and safe staging where necessary to assess hull plating to deck level.
- Note:** Where the attending surveyor deems the vessel unsafe/unfit for survey, or inadequate equipment/arrangements have been provided for access by the applicant or their representative, then the surveyor may decline to survey the vessel and further fees may be incurred for re-attendance.
- 2.10 Once the Registration Survey has been completed, the Surveyor will forward a copy of the Registration Survey Comparison Report to the applicant and a MCA Consultant Surveyor. The Comparison Report will identify where the vessel does and does not meet the appropriate Standards.



2.11 The applicant must also sign a Declaration confirming that when presenting this vessel for MCA Inspection against MSN 1871, they shall present the vessel in the same condition as it was presented for the Registration Survey, with the exception of addressing any deficiencies identified in the Registration Survey Comparison Report and that they will obtain prior approval from the MCA for any other modifications to the vessel before making those modifications

2.12 The MCA will review the Report and the resultant action may follow three paths:

- .1 the MCA will accept the Report and, subject to an Inspection against MSN 1871, agree to Register the vessel
- .2 refuse to Register the vessel; or
- .3 require additional work to be undertaken on the vessel to bring the vessel up to the required standard to be Registered. When additional work is required and before accepting the vessel meets the required standard, the MCA may, depending on the nature of the required work, either:
 - .1 accept the applicant's confirmation that the work has been undertaken; or
 - .2 require the work to be overseen by the authorised surveyor and confirmation received that the work has been completed to the standard required.

2.13 Once the Registration Survey Comparison Report has been accepted by the MCA, the vessel must still undergo an Inspection against MSN 1871 and be issued a Small Fishing Vessel Certificate before it can be Registered as a Fishing Vessel.

2.14 The MCA, on Inspection of the vessel against MSN 1871, may refuse to Register the vessel if the vessel condition does not match the details set out in the submitted Report. In such circumstances, a new Registration Survey Comparison Report may be requested.

2.15 Any vessels that are presented for inspection with modifications undertaken after the completion of the Registration Survey Comparison Report, may be refused Registration and requested to undergo a new Registration Survey.

3. Certification

3.1 Only vessels which are deemed to meet the equivalent standards will be accepted for registration. Vessels which fail to meet the equivalent standards will not be registered.

3.2 MSN 1871, Section 3.7 states:

- 3.1 *Substantial modifications, either funded through grants or other means, or alterations affecting the vessel's dimensions, structure or stability, the removal or repositioning of machinery or engines, changes in the vessel's mode of fishing and/or its gear or the fitting of additional equipment shall be investigated, prior to making any changes, to ensure that the vessel will continue to comply with the required stability criteria. In addition, such modifications or alterations to any vessel shall only be carried out after consultation and with the approval of the MCA.*

3.3 Applicants must therefore not make any changes to the vessels mode of fishing without the approval of the MCA. The Small Fishing Vessel Certificate issued to the vessel may



include any conditions considered necessary, such as restrictions on the type of fishing or area of operation.

More Information

Vessel Standards Branch
Maritime and Coastguard Agency
Bay 2/22
Spring Place
105 Commercial Road
Southampton
SO15 1EG

Tel : +44 (0) 203 8172452
e-mail: david.fenner@mcga.gov.uk

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

General Enquiries: infoline@mcga.gov.uk

File Ref: MS88/1/673

Published: February 2018
Please note that all addresses and
telephone numbers are correct at time of publishing

© Crown Copyright 2018

Safer Lives, Safer Ships, Cleaner Seas



Annex 1

Risk Assessment Matrix Scoring System

Vessel Name			
Owner			
Fishing No			
FACTOR	CRITERIA	POINTS	SCORE
Hull material	Steel	0	
	FRP	10	
	Aluminium	20	
	Wood	30	
	Other	40	
Registered length	Under 7m	10	
	7m to 15m	5	
Year of build	Built before 16 July 2007 and <20 years since build	10	
	Built before 16 July 2007 and between 20 and <25 years since build	20	
	25 years or more since build	100	
Mode of fishing Under 7m	Potter/Netter/Lining	30	
	Trawler/dredger	100	
Mode of fishing 7m to 15m	Potter/Netter/Lining	30	
	Trawler/dredger	40	
Certification- Under 7m	Seafish certificate	0	
	Class rules	0	
	CE recreational craft directive. A&B	40	
	ISO 12215 and ISO 12217	40	
	CE recreational craft directive. C&D	100	
None of the above	100		
Certification- 7m to 15m	Seafish certificate	0	
	Class rules	0	
	CE recreational craft directive A&B	50	
	ISO 12215 and ISO 12217	50	
	CE recreational craft directive. C&D	100	
None of the above	100		
Stability	Full Stability	Minus 50	
	Survivability	Minus 20	
		Total	

