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## Vessel Modifications – Pre Approval by MCA

### Notice to all Designers, Builders, Owners, Employer and Skippers of Fishing

*This notice should be read with MSN 1871 Amendment No.1, MSN 1872, Amendment No.1 and MSN 1873 Amendment No.1*

*This MIN expires on 28 October 2021*

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#### Summary

This Note reminds designers, builders, owners and skippers of fishing vessels that modifications to vessels must be approved by the MCA prior to work taking place.

Designers, owners, builders, and skippers should therefore be aware that:

- they should speak to the MCA before submitting applications for funding or commencing any work on modifications;
- if work commences without MCA approval, the Safety Certificate may be suspended;
- the MCA may require removal or amendment of unapproved modifications, which may not be covered by additional funding.

To assist, this Note provides information on commonly undertaken modifications and whether MCA pre-approval is required.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. Fishing Vessels are required to ensure that, prior to modifications being carried out on their vessel, they seek MCA approval to ensure that safety of the vessel is not affected. This approval should be sought regardless of whether these modifications are being undertaken with or without funding.

## 2. Requirements of the Codes of Practice

- 2.1 The requirements regarding MCA approval of vessel modifications are contained in the following Statutory Instrument and Codes of Practice:
- The Fishing Vessels (Codes of Practice) Regulations 2017 No.943



- MSN 1871 (F) Amendment No.1 The Code of Practice for the Safety of Fishing Vessels of less than 15m Length Overall (LOA)
- MSN 1872 (F) Amendment No.1 The Code of Practice for the Construction and Use of Fishing Vessels of 15m LOA to less than 24m Registered Length (L)
- MSN 1873 (F) Amendment No.1 The Code of Practice for the Construction and Use of Fishing Vessels of 24m (L) and Over

2.2 The Codes require that 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. Advice to applicants for Funding**

3.1 By approaching the MCA prior to applying for funding, owners can ensure they:

- incorporate any amendments to the proposed modifications that the MCA may require into the application; and
- obtain MCA approval to proceed with the modification.

3.2 If, at the time you submit your application for funding, you are able to provide the MMO or your Devolved Administration with evidence that you have informed the MCA of your proposed modifications or have had them approved, this can provide evidence that your proposed modification has been considered for safety or is in the process of being considered. MCA surveyors can provide this evidence in a standard format.

3.3 The Fishing Vessels (Codes of Practice) Regulations 2017 state that if work commences on a modification without MCA approval, the owner is at risk of the Certificate being suspended whilst the MCA conducts an inspection or survey of the vessel. The MCA may require amendments to the intended modifications or potentially the vessel to be reinstated to its original condition. This work may not be covered by additional funding.

3.4 For this reason, it is particularly important that owners approach the MCA prior to submitting an application for funding to minimise the risk of the vessel being suspended from fishing and from having to undertake additional work to address the vessel's safety.

3.5 The table at Annex A shows the items that are commonly applied for. This list is NOT comprehensive. If the items you intend to apply for funding for are not included on this list or you are unsure if your item needs pre-approval, based on the requirements of the Code as set out in section 2.2 above, you should also contact the MCA prior to submitting an application.

### **4. Contact Details**

4.1 Contact details for MCA Marine Offices can be found in Annex B. An up to date list is always available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/maritime-and-coastguard-agency/about/access-and-opening>



## **More Information**

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

Tel: +44 (0) 203 8172454  
e-mail: [fishing@mcga.gov.uk](mailto:fishing@mcga.gov.uk)

Website Address: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/maritime-and-coastguard-agency](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/maritime-and-coastguard-agency)

General Enquiries: [infoline@mcga.gov.uk](mailto:infoline@mcga.gov.uk)

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telephone numbers are correct at time of publishing

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**ANNEX A – COMMON MODIFICATIONS REQUIRING PRIOR APPROVAL BY MCA UNDER THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE CODES OF PRACTICE.**

**THIS LIST IS NOT EXHAUSTIVE AND YOU SHOULD CHECK WITH MCA IF THE CHANGES TO THE VESSEL ARE NOT ON THIS LIST TO IDENTIFY WHETHER THEY REQUIRE PRE APPROVAL.**

Item/Works
Shelter deck
Wheelhouse
Other structural modifications i.e. adding or removing poops or gentries, closing or opening forecastle.
Landing davit/crane
Deck safety improvements – flooring, deck hatches, etc.
Nozzles
Hydraulics
Lifting points
Generator
Ice machine
Fish room improvements
Engine/Gearbox replacement
Propeller, shaft
Cat catcher
Crew comfort - heaters, toilet, bunks, kitchen facilities
Trawl doors
Bilge keels
Bulbous bow
Ballast keel
Tank – General and Fuel
Ballast
Bow thrusters
Bilge pump/alarm
Freeing Ports
Ventilation or openings leading to below deck
Conveyors
Safety rails
Shooting door



## ANNEX B - MCA MARINE OFFICES

### **Aberdeen Marine Office**

Marine House  
Blaikies Quay  
Aberdeen  
AB11 5EZ

Tel: 0203 817 2001  
Email [Aberdeenmo@mcga.gov.uk](mailto:Aberdeenmo@mcga.gov.uk)

### **Cardiff Marine Office**

Anchor Court  
Keen Road  
Cardiff  
CF24 5JW

Tel: 0203 90 85220  
Email [cardiffmo@mcga.gov.uk](mailto:cardiffmo@mcga.gov.uk)

### **Dover Marine Office**

Eastern Region  
Langdon Battery  
Swingate  
Dover  
Kent  
CT15 5NA

Tel: 0203 81 72789

### **Glasgow Marine Office**

1st Floor  
West Point  
West Point Business Park  
1 Marchfield Drive  
Paisley  
PA3 2RB

Tel: 0203 81 72011  
Email [glasgowmo@mcga.gov.uk](mailto:glasgowmo@mcga.gov.uk)

### **Liverpool Marine Office**

Hall Road West  
Crosby  
Liverpool  
Merseyside  
L23 8SY

Tel: 0203 90 85110  
Email [liverpoolmo@mcga.gov.uk](mailto:liverpoolmo@mcga.gov.uk)

### **Plymouth Marine Office**

Suite 5  
Endeavour House  
Oceansgate  
Vivid Approach  
Plymouth  
PL1 4RW

Tel: 0203 90 85245  
Email [plymouthmo@mcga.gov.uk](mailto:plymouthmo@mcga.gov.uk)

### **Belfast Marine Office**

Bregenz House  
Quay Street  
Bangor  
BT20 5ED

Tel: 0203 81 72012  
Email [belfastmo@mcga.gov.uk](mailto:belfastmo@mcga.gov.uk)

### **Colchester Marine Office**

Iceni Way  
Colchester  
Essex  
CO2 9BY

Tel: 0203 90 85165  
Email [colchestermo@mcga.gov.uk](mailto:colchestermo@mcga.gov.uk)

### **Falmouth Marine Office**

Pendennis Point  
Castle Drive  
Falmouth  
Cornwall  
TR11 4WZ

Tel: 0203 81 72652

### **Hull Marine Office**

Crosskill House  
Mill Lane  
Beverley  
North Humberside  
HU17 9JB

Tel: 0203 81 72018  
Email [hullmo@mcga.gov.uk](mailto:hullmo@mcga.gov.uk)

### **Milford Haven Marine Office**

Gorsewood Drive  
Hakin  
Milford Haven  
Pembrokeshire  
SA73 3HB

Tel: 0203 81 72007

### **Southampton Marine Office**

Spring Place  
105 Commercial Road  
Southampton  
SO15 1EG

Tel: 0203 81 72210  
Email [southamptonmo@mcga.gov.uk](mailto:southamptonmo@mcga.gov.uk)



**Tyne Marine Office**  
MCA North East Exam Centre  
C/o South Tyneside College  
St Georges Avenue  
South Shields  
NE34 6ET

Tel: 0203 81 72016

