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## **Code of Safe Working Practices for Merchant Seafarers: Amendment 2020**

**Notice to all shipowners, ship operators and managers, masters and seafarers**

*This notice replaces MIN 601 (M)*

*This MIN expires 30th November 2021*

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### **Summary**

This Marine Information Note provides information about the 2020 amendments to the Code of Safe Working Practices for Merchant Seafarers (“the Code”).

The Code covers the regulatory framework and provides best practice guidance for health and safety on board ship. It also gives guidance on safety management and identifies statutory duties underlying the advice and includes practical information for safe working on board.

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 An amendment to the Code of Safe Working Practices for Merchant Seafarers (“the Code”) was issued on 26th November 2020 after consultation with industry.
- 1.2 The Code is an authoritative best practice manual on health and safety on board ships and is endorsed by the National Maritime Occupational Health and Safety Committee (NMOHSC). It deals with the regulatory framework for health and safety on board ship, safety management and statutory duties underlying the advice and gives practical information on safe working.

## **2. Amendments**

- 2.1 The following table summarises the changes that have occurred in the 2019 4th Edition of the Code, following public consultation and review by the COSWP Working Group, which consists of representatives of the shipping industry, seafarers and seafarers’ unions in collaboration with MCA policy leads.
- 2.2 In addition, in various chapters references have been updated and typographical corrections made.



Chapter	Title / Paragraph Number (old reference if altered)	Reason for 2020 Amendment	2020 Amendment Title / Paragraph Number
Chapter 4 - Emergency Drills and Procedures	New section and Annex	To add current guidance on Damage Control Drills and clarification of drills per vessel class	<b>4.13</b> Damage Control Drills - New section
			<b>Annex 4.1</b> Table of Emergency Drills and their Frequency
Chapter 5 - Fire Precautions	5.3 Electrical and other fittings	Stakeholder engagement comment	<b>5.3.5</b> Amended wording
Chapter 6 – Security On Board	6.1 Introduction	Reference review	<b>6.1.1</b> MCA’s Wellbeing at Sea: A guide for organisations, Chapter 3.3, and Wellbeing at Sea: A pocket guide for seafarers, Chapter 2.5.
Chapter 9 - Safety Signs and their Use	9.1 Introduction	Chapter reviewed to reflect requirements of IMO Resolution A.1116(30)	<b>9.1</b> Referencing <b>9.1.1</b> Additional final sentence
Chapter 11 - Safe Movement Onboard Ship	11.5 Lighting	To reflect HSG38 – Lighting at Work and current guidance	<b>11.5.2</b> Grammatical amendment
			<b>11.5.3</b> Section reviewed
			<b>Annex 11.2</b> Lux values and bullet points updated
Chapter 12 - Noise, Vibration and Other Physical Agents	12.1 General Advice	Chapter review in light of HSE Hand, Arm Vibration (HAV) Guidance 2019	<b>12.1.1</b> Reference to MCA’s Wellbeing at Sea: A guide for organisations, Chapter 3.7.
	12.2 Prevention or control of exposure to a physical agent		<b>12.2.2</b> Bullet (1) <b>12.2.6</b> Amended wording
	12.12 Determining Vibration Levels		<b>12.12.8 &amp; 12.12.9</b> New sections relating to vibration exposure limit values (ELVs)
	12.14 Mitigation		<b>12.14.7</b> Section reviewed.
	Annex 12.2 Daily Exposure to Different Sound Levels		<b>Annex 12.2</b> Updated guidance to IMO Resolution MSC337(91) Code on Noise Levels onboard Ships
Chapter 15 - Entering Dangerous Spaces (Enclosed Spaces)	15.6 Testing the Atmosphere of the Space	Red Ensign Group Yacht meeting enquiry concerning SOLAS Chapter X1-1 – Portable Atmosphere Testers, as applicable to yachts.	<b>15.6.5</b> Amended wording for guidance on monitoring equipment <b>15.6.6</b> New section reflecting guidance for smaller vessels.
	15.6.11 Testing for toxic gases	All sections reviewed to follow current guidance.	<b>15.6.12</b> Testing for toxic gases; Amended wording and includes adjustment for testing for specific contaminants ‘ <i>such as benzene or hydrogen sulphide</i> ’ <b>15.6.13</b> New summary section with table outlining the conditions to be tested as a minimum, following current limits within EH40 as of August 2020. <a href="https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/eh40.htm">https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/eh40.htm</a>
	15.14 Preparation for an Emergency	Customer enquiry into the use of Emergency Escape Breathing Equipment (EEBD) when carrying out a rescue.  Sections reviewed to follow current guidance.	<b>15.14.5</b> Amended wording to consider what rescue equipment is needed. <b>15.14.8</b> Amendment of section to clarify use of EEBD during a rescue. <b>15.14.9</b> New section; ‘When entering a space to carry out a rescue, it is important to ensure that the area adjacent to the space of entry is free from any hazard and cordoned off accordingly’.



Chapter 18 – Provision, Care and Use of Work Equipment	18.17 Portable power-operated tools and equipment	Stakeholder engagement comment	<b>18.17.2</b> Amended section <b>18.17.3</b> Amended section <b>18.17.4</b> Amended section
Chapter 20 - Work on Machinery and Power Systems	20.2 General	To reflect current guidance and stakeholder engagement comments	<b>20.2.4</b> Addition of ' <i>prevented from</i> ' <b>20.2.8, 20.2.9 &amp; 20.2.10</b> New sections to reflect requirements for the isolation of power sources
	20.9 Refrigeration machinery and refrigerated compartments		<b>20.9.1</b> Addition to sentence ' <i>or having first completed a permit to work (PTW), as part of the risk assessment process.</i> ' <b>20.9.2</b> Addition to sentence ' <i>and appropriate PPE should be worn when undertaking any task involving the handling of chemicals.</i> '
	20.10 Steering Gear	Section reviewed to reflect the requirements of planned maintenance of 'critical equipment'.	<b>20.10</b> New title - Critical equipment.
			<b>20.11</b> Steering Gear – section reviewed
	20.11 Hydraulic and pneumatic equipment		<b>20.12</b> Hydraulic and pneumatic equipment
	20.12 Electrical Equipment 20.12.1	Lock Out Tag Out (LOTO) safety guidance	<b>20.13</b> Electrical Equipment  <b>20.13.1</b> Replaced word 'wetness' with ' <i>moisture</i> ' Review of wording 'as low as 60V' to ' <i>of 60V or lower</i> ' <b>20.13.3</b> New section - Lock out, tag out
	20.12.3	Stakeholder engagement comment	<b>20.13.7</b> Addition of wording ' <i>the energy source should be isolated and any residual energy dissipated first.</i> ' Addition of reference to LOTO.
	20.12.4		<b>20.13.8</b> new heading ' <i>Other Precautions</i> ' Additional wording to section.
	20.12.6	Stakeholder engagement comment	<b>20.13.10</b> Amendment to first bullet point ' <i>electrically competent and trained in first aid.</i> '
	20.14.2 Definitions	Amended to include LOTO	<b>20.15.2</b> Definitions Addition of new definition - LOTO: Lock out, Tag Out
20.14.12 Notices		<b>20.15.12</b> Addition of terminology (Tags)	
20.15 Arc-flash Associated with high and low voltage equipment	Section reviewed to reflect current NHS 2020 definitions		<b>20.16.3</b> Addition of 'partial-thickness' burns and NHS reference  <b>20.16.5</b> Addition of new section
20.16 Storage of Batteries: General	Stakeholder engagement comment		<b>20.17</b> Storage batteries; general <b>20.17.1</b> Amended section to follow manufacturer's instructions concerning battery storage.
Chapter 22 – Boarding Arrangements	22.6 Portable and rope Ladders	Reviewed portable rope ladder guidance	<b>22.6.4</b> Amended <b>22.6.5</b> Deleted <b>22.6.6</b> Deleted
Chapter 23 – Food Preparation and Handling in the Catering Department	23.1 Health and Hygiene	Reference review	MCA's Wellbeing at Sea: A guide for organisations, Chapter 3.8.1 and Wellbeing at Sea: A pocket guide for seafarers, Chapters 1.1 and 1.2.
Chapter 24 – Hot Work	24.8 Precautions to be taken during electric arc welding	Stakeholder engagement comment	<b>24.8.1</b> Updated official number references



Chapter 26 - Anchoring, Mooring and Safe Towing Operations	26.3 Making fast and casting off	Snapback zones – Nautilus Telegraph July 2019 outlining conflicts with advice between COSWP and MAIB’s Safety Digest 2019, Case 3	<p><b>26.3.1</b> Section reviewed with reference added to the; Effective Mooring (2019, 4th edition) from the Oil Companies International Marine Forum (OCIMF).</p> <p><b>26.3.2</b> Additional final sentence ‘Seafarers other than the mooring parties should keep clear of the mooring decks during mooring and unmooring operations’.</p> <p><b>26.3.3</b> Added reference to Annex 26.1 of potential snapback zones for illustrative purposes.</p> <p><b>26.3.11</b> Additional wording added to the section.</p> <p><b>26.3.12</b> Additional final sentence to highlight the risks when warping a vessel along a berth.</p>
	26.6 Safe mooring of domestic passenger craft and ships’ launches to quays	Chapter review to reflect the MAIB Report into the Tug <i>Millgarth 29</i> January 2019 incident.	<b>26.6.4</b> Amended section ‘ <i>Passengers and supernumerary personnel must be kept clear of all mooring and unmooring operations and all personnel should keep clear of snap-back zones</i> ’.
Appendix 1 - Regulations, Marine Notices and Guidance Issued by the MCA		Out of date or incorrect references amended.	To reflect new MCA wellbeing guidance: <a href="#">Wellbeing at Sea; A pocket Guide for Seafarers</a> and <a href="#">Wellbeing at Sea; A guide for organisations</a>
Appendix 2 - Other Sources of Information		Out of date or incorrect references amended.	Updated website references to latest guidance
Appendix 3 – Standards and Specifications referenced in this Code		Out of date or incorrect references amended.	Updated to the latest British Standard reference numbers

## More Information

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