



Maritime &  
Coastguard  
Agency

## MARINE GUIDANCE NOTE

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# MGN630 Amendment 4 (F)

## FISHING VESSELS: Pre-Registration surveys for Fishing Vessels

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 the Fishing Vessel (Code of Practice) Regulations 2017 No. 943, MSN1871 (F) The Code of Practice for the Safety of Fishing Vessels of less than 15m Length Overall, MSN1872 (F) The Code of Safe Working Practice for the construction and use of Fishing Vessels of 15m Length Overall to less than 24m Registered Length, MGN628 (M+F) Construction Standards for Fishing Vessels of less than 15m Length Overall and MGN629 (M+F) Construction Standards for Fishing Vessels of 15m Length Overall to less than 24m Registered Length

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## Summary

The Code of Practice for the Safety of Small Fishing Vessels of less than 15m Length Overall and the accompanying MSN 1871 Amendment 2 allow vessels of less than 15m Length Overall (LOA) built before 16 July 2007 to be considered by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) for Registration as fishing vessels. This Notice sets out the process in place to ensure the MCA is satisfied vessels are safe and suitable for commercial fishing. This Note also states that existing vessels of 15m LOA to less than 24m Registered Length wishing to join the Register may also, on a case-by-case basis, undergo the Pre-Registration Survey and the Note sets out the processes in place for this.

This Amendment sets out a revision to the process by which Pre Registration Comparison Reports will now be submitted by the Fishing Vessel Certifying Authority (FVCA) to the MCA Statutory Services Delivery Team (SSDT).

## 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. [MSN 1871 \(F\) Amendment No. 2, The Code of Practice for the Safety of Small Fishing Vessels of less than 15m Length Overall](#) and [MSN1872 The Code of Safe Working Practice for the Construction and Use of Fishing Vessels of 15m LOA to less than 24m Registered Length \(RL\)](#) require that vessels must meet a minimum standard of construction and outfit if they wish to become a fishing vessel.

1.2 [The Code of Practice for the Safety of Small Fishing Vessels of less than 15m Length Overall](#) 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. [MGN 628 \(M+F\) – Fishing Vessel Construction Standards for Fishing Vessels of less than 15m LOA](#) meets the requirements of the approved Fishing Vessel Construction Standard of a Certifying Authority.

1.3 [The Code of Practice for the Safety of Fishing Vessels of less than 15m Length Overall \(LOA\)](#) allows vessels built before 16 July 2007 to be registered as commercial fishing vessels provided that applicants can demonstrate by survey that the construction standard and condition of the vessel is satisfactory.

1.4 [MGN 629 \(M+F\) – Construction Standards for Fishing Vessels of 15m LOA to less than 24m RL](#) sets out the minimum standards for a new build vessel to meet the requirements of [MSN1872 The Code of Safe Working Practice for the Construction and Use of Fishing Vessels of 15m LOA to less than 24m Registered Length \(RL\)](#)

## **2. Policy – Fishing Vessels of less than 15m LOA built before 16 July 2007**

2.1 Vessels of less than 15m LOA which are not currently registered as fishing vessels and which are verified as being built before 16 July 2007, seeking to register as such, will be surveyed, against the requirements of Section 1.6.7 of [The Code of Practice for the Safety of Fishing Vessels of less than 15m Length Overall \(LOA\)](#). The Pre-Registration Survey Comparison Report shall be supplied to the MCA for consideration. See Section 4 for details of the survey process.

2.2 Fishing vessels of less than 15m LOA which leave the Fishing Vessel 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 Sections 1.6.1, 1.6.4, 1.6.5 or 1.6.6 of [The Code of Practice for the Safety of Fishing Vessels of less than 15m Length Overall \(LOA\)](#), dependent on the date of build for the vessel, before these vessels can be re-registered and re-certificated by the MCA.

2.3 The MCA will not accept any vessel that the applicant cannot demonstrate was constructed to a recognised standard. These standards include:

- Seafish Construction/Outfit Certificate as appropriate to the size of vessel
- FVCA Construction/Outfit Certificate, as appropriate to the size of vessel
- MCA Partial Declaration
- Class rules

- CE recreational craft directive. A&B
- ISO 12215 and ISO 12217
- CE recreational craft directive. C&D

2.4 The MCA may also accept vessels that can be demonstrated as being built to other equivalent construction standards. The applicant is responsible for demonstrating the equivalence of any standard not listed.

2.5 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 point 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.

2.6 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 Pre-Registration Survey Comparison Report. The purpose of this Report is to establish that the vessel's construction standard is equivalent to the requirements of [MGN 628 \(M+F\) – Fishing Vessel Construction Standards for Fishing Vessels of less than 15m LOA](#) 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 for choosing a vessel.

### **3. Policy – Fishing Vessels of 15m LOA to less than 24m (RL)**

3.1 The standards for vessels of 15m LOA to less than 24m RL can be found in [MGN 629 \(M+F\) – Construction Standards for Fishing Vessels of 15m LOA to less than 24m RL](#). New build work will be exclusively overseen by MCA, see [MSIS27 Chapter 1 Annex 24 New Build Procedures](#) for further details.

3.2 Section 1.3.13 of [MSN1872 The Code of Safe Working Practice for the Construction and Use of Fishing Vessels of 15m LOA to less than 24m L](#), as may be amended, sets out the requirements for existing vessels wishing to flag in.

3.3 Fishing Vessels of 15m LOA and over, if they leave the Register, will be treated as new vessels if they apply for Registration and must comply with the applicable standards as set out in this MGN and [MGN 629 \(M+F\)](#).

3.4 With the Seafish Standards for fishing vessels of 15m LOA to less than 24m RL now being republished as [MGN 629 \(M+F\)](#), MCA will, on a strictly case by case basis, allow for Pre-Registration Surveys of vessels of 15m LOA to less than 24m RL to be conducted by an FVCA.

### **4. Survey Process – All Vessels**

4.1 Once the applicant has identified a vessel of less than 15m LOA they wish to Register, they should contact an FVCA to request a pre-registration survey. Applicants wishing to Register vessels of 15m LOA to less than 24 RL must contact MCA first and be subject to the process set out in Section 1.13.13 of [MSN1872 The Code of Safe Working Practice for the Construction and Use of Fishing Vessels of 15m LOA to less than 24m L](#). Pre-Registration Surveys of vessels of 15m LOA to less than 24m RL by FVCAs must not commence without MCA approval. Failure to do so may lead to refusal of registration. A list of FVCAs that have signed agreements with the MCA is available from [www.gov.uk/guidance/fishing-vessel-certifying-authorities](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/fishing-vessel-certifying-authorities) or by calling 0203 81 72452.

NOTE: Wooden hulls sheathed in GRP will not be accepted for Registration.

4.2 Vessels should be presented to the FVCA in accordance with the conditions set out in Annex 2.

4.3 Once the Pre-Registration Survey has been completed, the FVCA will forward a copy of the Pre-Registration Survey Comparison Report to the applicant and to the MCA Statutory Services Delivery Team. The Comparison Report will identify where the vessel does and does not meet the appropriate Standards.

4.4 The applicant must also sign a Declaration confirming that when presenting this vessel for MCA Inspection, they shall present the vessel in the same condition as it was presented for the Pre-Registration Survey, with the exception of addressing any deficiencies identified in the Pre-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.

4.5 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 the relevant Code of Practice, 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:
  - .a accept the applicant's confirmation that the work has been undertaken; or
  - .b require the work to be overseen by an FVCA Surveyor and confirmation received that the work has been completed to the standard required.

4.6 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. Fees for Pre-Registration Survey work will be set by the FVCA.

4.7 Fees for MCA work reviewing the Comparison Report will be charged at the rate set out in the Merchant Shipping (Fees) Regulations 2018, as may be amended.

4.8 Based on the contents of the Report and whether the additional work identified can bring the vessel up to the required standards the MCA may either:

- .1 accept the Report and, subject to an Inspection against the relevant Code of Practice, agree to Register the vessel
- .2 refuse to Register the vessel.

## 5. Survey Process – All Vessels

5.1 Once the Pre-Registration Survey Comparison Report has been accepted by the MCA, the vessel must still undergo the following:

- For fishing vessels of less than 15m LOA, an Inspection against [The Code of Practice for the Safety of Fishing Vessels of less than 15m Length Overall \(LOA\)](#), as may be amended, be issued a Small Fishing Vessel Certificate before it can be Registered as a Fishing Vessel; or
- For fishing vessels of 15m LOA to less than 24m L, a survey against [MSN1872 The Code of Safe Working Practice for the Construction and Use of Fishing Vessels of 15m LOA to less than 24m L](#), as may be amended, be issued a United Kingdom Fishing Vessel Certificate before it can be Registered as a Fishing Vessel.

5.2 The MCA, on Inspection or survey of the vessel against The Code of Practice for the Safety of Fishing Vessels of less than 15m Length Overall (LOA) or MSN1872, 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 Pre-Registration Survey Comparison Report may be requested.

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

## 6. Certification

6.1 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.

6.2 Section 1.9 of [The Code of Practice for the Safety of Fishing Vessels of less than 15m Length Overall \(LOA\)](#) sets out the requirements on an owner to notify the MCA of any modifications to the vessel its machinery or fishing gear to ensure that the vessel continues to meet any stability requirements and that any modifications, alterations or changes to any Vessel shall meet the requirements of MGN 628 (M+F) and only be carried out after consultation with, and approval from MCA.

6.3 Section 1.7.2.12 iii) of [The Code of Practice for the Safety of Fishing Vessels of less than 15m Length Overall \(LOA\)](#) allows the MCA to cancel a Small Fishing Vessel Certificate

if a vessel has been substantially modified or altered or changed its mode of fishing without due authorisation by the MCA.

6.4 Section 1.3.5.5 of [MSN1872 The Code of Safe Working Practice for the Construction and Use of Fishing Vessels of 15m LOA to less than 24m L](#) also states that repairs, modifications or alterations to the structure or machinery of a vessel must be done in consultation and with MCA approval. Section 1.3.8.4.1 of MSN 1872 Amendment No.1 allows for a certificate to be cancelled if the repairs, modifications or alterations are done without authorisation.

6.5 With particular regard to Stability Section 3.1.5.1 of MSN1872 Amendment No.1 further specifies the modifications and alterations that must be notified to the MCA and that may only be undertaken following MCA approval.

6.6 Therefore for all vessels of less than 24m L undergoing the Pre-Registration Survey process, all applicants **must not** make any changes to the vessel's mode of fishing without the approval of the MCA. The Small Fishing Vessel Certificate or United Kingdom 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

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Please note that all addresses and telephone numbers are correct at time of publishing.

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## Annex 1

### Risk Assessment Matrix Scoring System – Fishing Vessels of less than 15m LOA

Vessel Name			
Owner			
Fishing No			
FACTOR	CRITERIA	POINTS	SCORE
Hull material	Steel	0	
	Aluminium	20	
	FRP/GRP	30	
	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	
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	
Stability	Full Stability	Minus 50	
	Survivability	Minus 20	
		Total	

## ANNEX 2

### Conditions for presenting a vessel for a Pre-registration survey

All Vessels when presenting the vessel for a survey must comply with a number of Conditions. 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.



## ANNEX 3

### FV FLAG-IN MATRIX- VESSELS OF 15M AND OVER

FACTOR	CRITERIA	POINTS	ALLOCATED SCORE
Vessel name			
IMO Number			
Company/Applicant			
<b>Losing flag White - Grey – Black; taken from the Paris MOU List</b>	White Listed Grey Listed Black Listed	0 20 60	
<b><sup>1</sup>Class society</b> <b>See also Note A:</b>	(a) UK authorised society (built and maintained to class) (b) other IACS member (c) non IACS member (i.e. NSI Standard) (d) vessel not classed (e) For 15-24m vessels only – Meets Flag in requirements of 15 – 24 metre Code (Equivalent build standard to Seafish or MGN629)	0 20 30 100 30	
<b>Vessel Type</b>	Long Liner Seiner Pelagic Trawler/Seiner Potter Mussel Dredger Bottom Trawler Scallop (outriggers only) Beam Trawler/Scallop	0 5 5 5 10 10 15 20	
<b>Age</b>	0-15 16-25 Over 25	0 30 60	
<b>Flag State History</b>	Available for previous 24 months No History	0 20	
<b>Inspection History</b>	No deficiencies in last 12 months 0-10 deficiencies in last 12 months 11 – 20 deficiencies in last 12 months 20 deficiencies or more in last 12 months	0 10 20 30	
<b>Detention History</b>	Detained once in last 12 months Detained twice in last 12 months Detained more than twice in last 12 months Detained once in last 24 months Detained twice in last 24 months Detained more than twice in last 24 months Detained once in last 5 years Detained twice in last 5 years Detained more than twice in last 5 years	15 30 60 10 25 50 10 20 40	
		<b>TOTAL</b>	
<b>Name of CSM</b>	Check CSM database		

<sup>1</sup> Consideration of the Class Society relates to the Society BEFORE transfer to the UK Register.

**SURVEY THRESHOLDS - FOR USE WITH ABOVE TABLE**

Actual Score	Flag in by MCA through survey	Pre Flag in Inspection by MCA prior to flag in survey	Refer to Flag in Panel	Refer to Flag in Panel for confirmation of refusal to register
0 – 50	✓			
51 – 100		✓		
101 – 120			✓	
121 +				✓

**NOTES**

- A. Classification Society:** A previously un-classed over 24 metre Fishing Vessel or one classed with a non UK authorised classification society may be accepted subject to a UK authorised classification society classing the vessel prior to joining the UK Register and rigorous survey by the MCA.

