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## **REVISED CARRIAGE REQUIREMENTS FOR AUTOMATIC IDENTIFICATION SYSTEMS (AIS)**

Notice to shipowners, builders, masters and ship's officers, shore based maintenance providers, equipment manufacturers, classification societies, and all other parties concerned.

This Notice should be read in conjunction with the Merchant Shipping (Safety of Navigation) Regulations 2002 and the MCA publication Safety of Navigation, Implementing SOLAS Chapter V, 2002

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### *Summary*

Key Notes:

1. The timetable for the carriage of AIS has been revised.  
As a consequence, the majority of ships should be equipped with AIS by 31 December 2004.

### **Introduction / Background**

1. Decisions made recently in the IMO and the EC have modified the implementation timetable for the carriage of Automatic Identification Systems (AIS) from that agreed for the revised Chapter V (Safety of Navigation) of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) which entered into force on 1 July 2002. The revised Chapter V was given effect by The Merchant Shipping (Safety of Navigation) Regulations 2002 (SI 2002 No.1473) which is supported by the MCA publication "*Safety of Navigation, Implementing SOLAS Chapter V, 2002*".
2. Discussions in IMO's Maritime Safety Committee and its Maritime Security Working Group on a review of procedures to prevent acts of terrorism which threaten the security of passengers and crews and the safety of ships resulted in a Conference of Contracting Governments in December 2002.
3. This Conference adopted the International Ship & Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code together with amendments to the SOLAS Convention. These amendments were subsequently accepted on 1 January 2004 to enter into force on 1 July 2004.
4. The amendments to Chapter V of SOLAS involve Regulation 19 as follows:
  1. *The existing subparagraphs .4, .5 and .6 of paragraph 2.4.2 are replaced by the following:*  
  
*"4.in the case of ships, other than passenger ships and tankers, of 300 gross tonnage and upwards but less than 50,000 gross tonnage, not later than the first safety equipment survey after 1 July 2004 or by 31 December 2004, whichever occurs earlier: and"*
  2. *The following new sentence is added at the end of the existing subparagraph .7 of paragraph 2.4:*

*“Ships fitted with AIS shall maintain AIS in operation at all times except where international agreements, rules or standards provide for the protection of navigational information.”*

5. In practice these changes mean that all ships on international voyages of 300 gross tonnage and upwards should fit AIS by 31 December 2004 at the latest.
6. Agreement in the European Union concerning long term aims to improve the monitoring of traffic in European Community waters resulted, in 2002, in Directive 2002/59/EC of the European Parliament and Council establishing a Community Vessel Traffic Monitoring and Information System. Article 6 and Annex II (1) of this Directive lay down carriage requirements for AIS which are based on the SOLAS requirements but differ in the following respects:
  - They apply to any ship calling at a port of a Member State
  - The definition of “ship” is extended to include any sea - going vessel or craft.
7. In practice, this results in the dates for fitting AIS to ships on domestic voyages being brought forward from the SOLAS date of 1 July 2008. It further results in the size of cargo ships on domestic voyages required to fit AIS being reduced from the SOLAS 500 gross tonnage to 300 gross tonnage. It also extends the carriage requirement to include High Speed Craft.

#### **Revised Timetable for AIS Carriage Requirements**

8. The revised timetable for the carriage of AIS is given in the attached Appendix for the information of shipowners. This table now replaces that in Annex 17 of *Safety of Navigation, Implementing SOLAS Chapter V, 2002*. Advance notification of the revised requirements was given in the update to the above document dated June 2003.

#### **Domestic Passenger Ships**

9. It should be noted that AIS is now an immediate carriage requirement for passenger ships of 300 gross tonnage or more of Class IIA, III, IV, VI, VIA and Classes A, B, C, and D. The MCA will contact the owners of such vessels to discuss implementation arrangements.

#### **Operation of AIS**

10. The changes to Chapter V of SOLAS introduce a new requirement to maintain AIS in operation at all times, although the requirement is largely a reinforcement of the existing requirements to automatically provide and receive AIS information. The requirement is bound by the exception of “where international agreements, rules or standards provide for the protection of navigational information.” These agreements, rules or standards refer to the IMO Guidelines for the Onboard Operational Use of Shipborne Automatic Identification Systems (Resolution A.917(22)). Paragraph 21 of these guidelines was modified by the 23<sup>rd</sup> Assembly in December 2003 to introduce concepts for security incidents and mandatory reporting systems. The complete text of paragraph 21 is now:

*“AIS should always be in operation when ships are underway or at anchor. If the master believes that the continual operation of AIS might compromise the safety or security of his / her ship or where security incidents are imminent, the AIS may be switched off. Unless it would further compromise the safety or security, if the ship is operating in a mandatory reporting system, the master should report this action and the reason for doing so to the competent authority. Actions of this nature should always be recorded in the ship’s logbook together with the reason for doing so. The master should however restart the AIS as soon as the source of danger has disappeared. If the AIS unit is shut-down, static data and voyage related information remains stored. Restart is done by switching on the power to the AIS unit. Ship’s own data will be transmitted after a two minute initialisation period. In ports AIS operation should be in accordance with port requirements.”*

#### **Installation of Shipborne AIS**

11. AIS should be installed according to the guidance given in SN/Circ.227 (Guidelines for the Installation of a Shipborne Automatic Identification System). Particular care should be taken to ensure that the ship’s data; MMSI, IMO number, Call sign, Name, Type and Dimensions are correctly programmed. SN/Circ.227 is reproduced in Annex 17 of *Safety of Navigation, Implementing SOLAS Chapter V, 2002* as updated June 2003.

**Safety of Navigation, Implementing SOLAS  
Chapter V, 2002**

12. *Safety of Navigation, Implementing SOLAS Chapter V, 2002* is published as ISBN 0 110552575 0 by The Stationary Office and may also be accessed (incorporating amendments) through the MCA website on [www.mcga.gov.uk/c4mca/mcga-regs/safetyofnavigation/index.htm](http://www.mcga.gov.uk/c4mca/mcga-regs/safetyofnavigation/index.htm)  
It is also available free of charge on CD-ROM by contacting Mrs Anne Sutherland at the address below.

**Merchant Shipping (Safety of Navigation)  
Regulations**

13. SI No. 1473, 2002, ISBN no.0 11 042349 6, is available from The Stationery Office. It can be viewed on Her Majesty's Stationery Office web site [www.legislation.hmso.gov.uk/stat.htm](http://www.legislation.hmso.gov.uk/stat.htm)

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APPENDIX

AUTOMATIC IDENTIFICATION SYSTEMS (AIS)

**Carriage Requirements**

<b>AUTOMATIC IDENTIFICATION SYSTEMS – IMPLEMENTATION</b>	
Applies to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All ships of 300 gt. and upwards on international voyages or calling at a port of a Member State of the EU.</li><li>• All passenger ships, including High Speed Craft, irrespective of size or of 300 gt. and upwards if engaged in domestic trade.</li></ul>	
<b>TYPE OF VESEL</b>	<b>DATE BY WHICH AIS MUST BE FITTED</b>
<b>1. Ships constructed on or after 1 July 2002 (“new ships”)</b>	Date of build
<b>2. Ships constructed before 1 July 2002 (“existing ships.”)</b>	
2.1 Passenger ships	1 July 2003
2.2 Tankers	1 <sup>st</sup> survey for safety equipment on or after 1 July 2003
2.3 Ships other than tankers or passenger ships of 50,000 gt. or more	1 July 2004
2.4 Ships other than tankers or passenger ships of 300 gt and upwards but less than 50,000 gt engaged on international voyages.	1 <sup>st</sup> survey for safety equipment after 1 July 2004 or by 31 December 2004, whichever occurs earlier.
2.5 Ships other than tankers or passenger ships 10,000 – 49,999 gt not engaged on international voyages	1 July 2005
2.6 Ships other than tankers or passenger ships 3000-9999 gt not engaged on international voyages	1 July 2006
2.7 Ships other than tankers or passenger ships 300 – 2999 gt not engaged on international voyages	1 July 2007