Sjøfartsdirektoratet
Norwegian Maritime Authority

Circular - Series R

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Regulation amending the Regulations of 30 August 2016 No. 1042 on marine equipment – voluntary equipment

1. Amendments to the Marine Equipment Regulations adopted

The Norwegian Maritime Authority (NMA) has today adopted amendments to the Regulations of 30 August 2016 No. 1042 on marine equipment (Marine Equipment Regulations).

The amendments mean that shipping companies may now also voluntarily carry various types of navigational equipment on passenger ships engaged on domestic voyages without the equipment being required to bear a wheel mark. The term "voluntary" refers to equipment that is not required to be carried on board under any regulations, but which the company nevertheless chooses to place on board for various reasons.

The amendments consist of extending the note[1] currently appearing in the cell at the intersection of column IV, *Navigational equipment*, and the row *Cargo ships without international safety certificate* in Appendix IV to the Regulations so that it also applies to *Passenger ships with passenger certificate*, *Passenger ships with Passenger Ship Safety Certificate (EU)* and *All high-speed craft*:

2. The consultation

The proposed amendments to the Marine Equipment Regulations were circulated for consultation on 6 March 2026 with a deadline for comments of 15 June 2026. The NMA received eight responses to the proposal. Three respondents had no comments, while five expressed support for the proposal.

The Directorate for Cultural Heritage requested that the NMA consider preparing separate guidance in this area for vessels of historical interest. As the amendments mean that companies may voluntarily carry non-wheel-marked navigational equipment on board, the NMA does not consider there to be a need for any such separate guidance. However, guidance may be provided in individual cases upon request from companies owning protected or historic vessels.

Based on the feedback received, the NMA has concluded that the proposed amendments may be adopted without amendments.

3. Comments on the amendments

Pursuant to section 1, the Marine Equipment Regulations apply to marine equipment which is to be placed, or has been placed, on board Norwegian ships. Marine equipment shall comply with the requirements set out in section 2 and shall bear a wheel mark.

For passenger ships, it has been assumed that the Marine Equipment Regulations also require wheel marking of equipment which companies choose to place on board even though the carriage of such equipment is not required under the various equipment regulations, that is, equipment carried on board on a voluntary basis.

[1] "* Does not apply to equipment voluntarily placed on board"

The NMA has received enquiries from the industry stating that this approach limits the choice of equipment that may be carried on board and that it both increases costs and prevents the use of other suitable equipment. The industry has requested flexibility to choose additional equipment tailored to its needs. The industry has therefore expressed a wish that navigational equipment which companies voluntarily choose to carry on board, and which is not required under the Regulations of 5 September 2014 No. 1157 on navigation and navigational aids for ships and mobile offshore units[2], should not be subject to wheel-marking requirements.

The amendments now adopted respond to the industry's request by harmonising the regulatory framework applicable to cargo ships and passenger ships in this regard. The amendments consist of extending the note currently appearing in the cell at the intersection of column IV, *Navigational equipment*, and the row *Cargo ships without international safety certificate* in Appendix IV to the Regulations so that it also applies to *Passenger ships with passenger certificate*, *Passenger ships with Passenger Ship Safety Certificate (EU)* and *All high-speed craft*.

Allowing the use of non-wheel-marked navigational equipment on passenger ships means that companies may voluntarily equip ships with various types of equipment that are not required to be carried on board. Such equipment is not developed in accordance with a common standard, and its quality and functionality may therefore vary. Navigational equipment falling within this category varies in quality and price and is often not designed for commercial shipping or developed in accordance with a common standard, which may affect its accuracy, reliability and robustness. Consequently, such equipment should only be used as a supplement to reliable means of navigation.

It is important that voluntary equipment is used responsibly and in accordance with section 14 of the Ship Safety and Security Act, which requires ships to be navigated in such a manner that no danger arises to life, health, the environment or property, and that such equipment is neither confused with nor used as a substitute for required navigational equipment.

Voyage planning, plotting and monitoring shall be carried out using official nautical charts and nautical publications. Ships navigating by means of paper charts must have the necessary facilities on board for such navigation both by day and night.

4. Financial and administrative consequences

The amendments mean that cargo ships and passenger ships will have the same opportunity to carry voluntary equipment that does not bear a wheel mark. The amendments do not require companies to acquire new equipment. Accordingly, no adverse financial consequences for companies are anticipated as a result of the amendments. The amendments may, however, have some impact on suppliers of navigational equipment, as the use of wheel-marked equipment will no longer be as influential in companies' choice of equipment.

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[2] Regulations of 5 September 2014 No. 1157 on navigation and navigational aids for ships and mobile offshore units

Attachments:

1. Regulation amending the Regulations of 30 August 2016 No. 1042 on marine equipment
2. Consultation matrix