Sjøfartsdirektoratet
Norwegian Maritime Authority

Circular - Series R

Circular Series R (Regulations) supersedes previous Series F. In the new Series R, relevant legal amendments and amendments to conventions are also published.

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Reference to: Regulations on helicopter decks on mobile offshore units

The Circular should be entered into a special diagram or as appropriate in the latest editions of relevant NMA publications and kept until the next editions.

Amendments to the Regulations on helicopter decks on mobile offshore units

1. Introduction

The Norwegian Maritime Authority (NMA) has laid down amendments to the Regulations of 18 March 2021 No. 815 on helicopter decks on mobile offshore units. The main purpose of the amendments is to deal with shortcomings in the Regulations, correct errors that have been identified and clarify ambiguous wording to avoid any misunderstanding.

2. The consultation

The proposal was circulated for review from 26 May to 27 August 2023. The NMA has received five consultative statements. The Norwegian Civil Aviation Authority commented that the new section 21 a (2) appeared to be equivalent to the provision of section 53 third paragraph of the Regulations of 14 May 2019 No. 604 relating to helicopter operations – use of offshore helidecks, and that the provision sets out a different date for point of intersection compared to the mentioned section 53. The date of the second paragraph is the same date as the date of entry into force of the Regulations. The Ministry of Justice and Public Security, the Norwegian Petroleum Safety Authority, Equinor and the Norwegian Union of Marine Engineers did not have comments to the proposal.

3. Details on the amendments

In section 21 second paragraph subparagraphs c and d, it is demonstrated that signs referred to in section 30 second paragraph and repeater lights not exceeding a height of 25 cm above the helideck level should be accepted on the helideck in the 210° approach and take-off sector. This amendment corresponds with the Regulations of 14 May 2019 No. 604 relating to helicopter operations – use of offshore helidecks section 27 subparagraph c.

The exemption in the current section 21 third paragraph for mobile offshore units initially certified before 1 April 2021 or for which the building contract was placed before 1 April 2021 is ambiguous and may cause misunderstandings. The exemption which, after the amendment, is set out in section 21 a second paragraph, has the same wording as in section 12 of the repealed Regulations from 15 January 2008 No. 72 on helicopter decks on mobile offshore units. Amendments are also made to the text in figures 3 and 4. The remaining wording of section 21

third paragraph has been moved to new section 21 a first paragraph.

Moreover, the NMA has removed the term “status lights” in section 31 sixth paragraph. Status lights are regulated through the reference to the MODU Code in the same section fifth paragraph, hence the duplicate requirement should be removed. Section 13.5.26.8 of the MODU Code stipulates that the status light system should reach full intensity in not more than three seconds at all times. The NMA interprets this as a requirement for uninterrupted power supply.

In section 43 sixth paragraph, the requirement for the drip tray to be dimensioned for the expected quantity of water from the deluge system has been removed. This requirement is removed due to the practical consequences of the requirement, and the fact that the requirement is unlikely to increase safety significantly. It is thus the NMA's assessment that that it is not sensible to continue the requirement.

4. Administrative and financial implications

The amendments will have a clarifying effect and are not expected to have significant financial and administrative consequences for the authorities nor the industry.

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