Sjøfartsdirektoratet
Norwegian Maritime Authority

Circular - Series R

Circular Series R (Regulations) supersedes previous Series F.
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Amendments to the Regulations on radio communication equipment for Norwegian ships and mobile offshore units

1. Introduction

The Norwegian Maritime Authority (NMA) has laid down amendments to the Regulations of 1 July 2014 No. 955 on radio communication equipment for Norwegian ships and mobile offshore units.

Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) Convention chapter IV on radio communication has been amended by IMO Resolution MSC.436(99), which was adopted on 24 May 2018, and the amended provisions enter into force on 1 January 2020. The regulatory amendments now laid down implement the amendment into Norwegian legislation.

2. Consultation

The proposed amendments were circulated for review from 2 August to 1 November 2019. Nine bodies replied to the consultation, but none of these had any comments to the amendments.

3. Details on the legislation

SOLAS chapter IV is incorporated into Norwegian legislation by the Regulations of 1 July 2014 No. 955 on radio communication equipment for Norwegian ships and mobile offshore units, section 2 first paragraph. The implementing provision of section 2 has been changed to make it comply with the revised international legislation. Additionally, amendments to sections 1 and 5 have been implemented.

In the amendments of SOLAS chapter IV on radio communication equipment, all references to the service provider Inmarsat are removed or replaced with the generic term “recognized mobile satellite service”. The purpose of these amendments is to allow other providers to provide services and equipment related to the Global Maritime Distress Safety System (GMDSS). Other mobile satellite communication systems may now be recognised by the IMO for use in the GMDSS pursuant to Resolution A.1001(25). However, the current text in SOLAS chapter IV does not allow for use of equipment other than Inmarsat equipment. The amendments are therefore necessary in order to ensure that ships may use equipment from other service providers in order to meet the requirements for radio communication equipment.

To section 1: The wording of section 1 has been corrected to clarify the fact that the Regulations apply to cargo ships regardless of length.

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To section 5: The wording of section 5 third and fourth paragraphs have been corrected in accordance with the intention behind the provision. The content of section 8 of the repealed Regulations of 11 November 1991 No. 731 on radio communication on passenger ships was changed unintentionally in 2016, and the correction of third and fourth paragraphs will also make the wording reflect the NMA's administrative practice.

4. Economic and administrative consequences of the proposal

The regulatory amendments include an update of the legislation related to radio communication equipment for Norwegian ships and mobile offshore units. The amendments are not expected to have any financial consequences for the involved parties.

The NMA will adapt the enforcement of the legislation to the amendments to SOLAS chapter IV. Beyond this, the amendments are not considered to have any significant administrative consequences.

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This document has been electronically approved, and therefore does not contain handwritten signatures.