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## **Code of Safe Working Practices for Merchant Seafarers: Amendment 2019**

**Notice to all shipowners, ship operators and managers, masters and seafarers**

*This notice replaces MIN 584 (M)*

*This MIN expires 30th November 2020*

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### **Summary**

This Marine Information Note provides information about the 2019 amendments to the Code of Safe Working Practices for Merchant Seafarers (“the Code”).

The Code deals with the regulatory framework and provides best practice guidance for health and safety on board ship. It also gives guidance on safety management and identifies statutory duties underlying the advice and includes practical information for safe working on board.

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 An amendment to the Code of Safe Working Practices for Merchant Seafarers (“the Code”) was issued on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2019 after consultation with industry.
- 1.2 The Code is an authoritative best practice manual on health and safety on board ships and is endorsed by the National Maritime Occupational Health and Safety Committee (NMOHSC). It deals with the regulatory framework for health and safety on board ship, safety management and statutory duties underlying the advice and gives practical information on safe working.

### **2. Amendments**

- 2.1 The following table summarises the changes that have occurred in the 2019 4<sup>th</sup> Edition of the Code, following public consultation and review by the COSWP Working Group, which consists of representatives of the shipping industry, seafarers and seafarers’ unions in collaboration with MCA policy leads.
- 2.2 In addition, in various chapters references have been updated and typographical corrections made.



Chapter Number and Title	Title / Paragraph Number (old reference if altered)	Reason for 2019 Amendment	2019 Amendment Title / Paragraph Number
Chapter 1 –	Annexes	Reinstate example of risk matrix for training purposes.	New <b>Annex 1.3</b> and <b>Annex 1.4</b>
Chapter 3 – Living on Board	3.3 Smoking	E-Cigarettes - Health risks and risks from battery packs	New sub-section <b>3.3.5</b> Reference information to Public Health England and NHS websites added to <b>Appendix 2</b> .
Chapter 3 – Living on Board	3.8 Working in cold climates and environments	3.8.1 Link to the York University, Canada outdated.	<b>3.8.1</b> Reference to the Canadian Centre for Occupational Safety and Health <a href="https://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/phys_agents/cold_working.html">https://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/phys_agents/cold_working.html</a>
Chapter 3 – Living on Board	3.13 Sunglasses; Sub-section 3.13.4 & Sub-section 3.13.5	Correction of reference and revised guidance to reflect that in some circumstances. Polarised Lenses are considered beneficial and are widely used by seafarers.	<b>3.13.4</b> Reference corrected to MGN 357 (M+F) Night time look out: photochromic lenses and dark adaptation <b>3.13.5</b> Reviewed and sentences adjusted, to advise that seafarers should be aware of the benefits and limitations of polarised lenses.
Chapter 9 – Safety Signs and Their Use	References	Appendix 2 updated.	Appendix 2; <b>9.4.6</b> IMO Resolution A.952(23) Graphical Symbols for Shipboard Fire Control Plans <a href="http://www.imo.org/en/KnowledgeCentre/In dexofIMOResolutions/Assembly/Documents/A.952(23).pdf">http://www.imo.org/en/KnowledgeCentre/In dexofIMOResolutions/Assembly/Documents/A.952(23).pdf</a> <b>9.4.9</b> IMO Resolution A.1116(30) Escape Route Signs and Equipment Location Markings <a href="http://www.imo.org/en/KnowledgeCentre/In dexofIMOResolutions/Assembly/Documents/A.1116%2830%29.pdf">http://www.imo.org/en/KnowledgeCentre/In dexofIMOResolutions/Assembly/Documents/A.1116%2830%29.pdf</a>
Chapter 10 – Manual Handling	New sub-section	Raising Pilot Ladders from Lower Levels - to address concerns about incidents of seafarer musculo-skeletal injuries.	<b>10.5</b> Safety for seafarers rigging accommodation and pilot ladders; <b>10.5.1</b> sentence reviewed to reflect the need to consider posture and lifting from lower levels in stages. <b>Sub-section 10.5.2</b> added highlighting the dangers and risks associated with working over side.
Chapter 12 – Noise, Vibration and Other Physical Agents	12.1 General Advice  12.16 Health surveillance and health monitoring: vibration	Updated to reflect current guidance.  Guidance to reflect the use of seafarers questionnaires to assess impacts and risks.	<b>12.1.1</b> Addition of last sentence; “Poor environmental conditions may also be a contributing factor to increasing the level of fatigue suffered by seafarers.” <b>12.1.2</b> Addition in first sentence; “(including fatigue)” <b>12.1.4</b> Addition within paragraph; “The company should provide information and relevant training to personnel so that they know and understand the risks from any physical agents arising from their living and working environment ....” <b>12.16.3</b> Addition to final paragraph; “Guidance on health monitoring for those at risk from whole-body vibration, including use of health monitoring questionnaires to monitor seafarers’ symptoms, is available on the HSE website.”



Chapter 13 – Safety Officials	13.3 Company duties  13.8 Accident Investigation	To reflect Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) amendments; B4.3.1 and B4.3.6 on bullying and harassment	<b>13.3.2.2</b> Addition of new bullet point; “Human and organisational factors in safety critical work”.  <b>13.8.4</b> Amendment to include common human and organisational factors in incidents.
Chapter 14 – Permits to Work Systems	Annex 14.1	Clarification	<b>Annex 14.1</b> Categories of work requiring a permit to work: bullet point amended to “any work requiring use of gas testing / equipment”.
Chapter 17 – Work at Height	17.7 Scaffolding, including scaffolding towers          Annex 17.4 Requirements for scaffolding	To reflect concerns relating to;  - mixed component parts within scaffolding and component compatibility;  - movement of the scaffolding tower when in use.	<b>17.7.2</b> Paragraph redrafted to add reference to a ‘competent person’ to do strength calculation and the addition of the final sentence; “Appropriate procedures for conducting testing should be followed. When replacing components, care should be taken to ensure compatibility with the existing scaffolding, and retesting of the structure may be required.”  <b>17.7.3</b> Added reference to <b>Annex 17.4</b> <b>17.7.4</b> Addition of last sentence; “Never move a scaffolding while people or materials are on the structure.”  <b>17.7</b> Reference added to <b>Appendix 2</b> ; <a href="http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/safetyto pics/scaffold.htm">http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/safetyto pics/scaffold.htm</a>  <b>Annex 17.4 (12)</b> addition to last bullet point; “In addition; - appropriate procedures for conducting testing as necessary - avoid combining old and new components where possible, with regular testing where the compatibility of parts may be at question.”
Chapter 20 – Work on Machinery and Power Systems	20.12 Electrical Equipment 20.12.3  20.12.7 & New sub-sections	Review of paragraphs for clarity of content.  MGN 177 (M+F) Accidents involving electrical test equipment to be incorporated into COSWP.	<b>20.12.3</b> Position of final two sentences reversed.  <b>20.12.7</b> Amendment to first sentence: “Any test meters (and their associated leads/probes) used should be rated for the voltage and/or current being tested...”  <b>20.12.8 &amp; 20.12.9</b> New sub-sections to incorporate MGN 177 into COSWP.
Chapter 21 – Hazardous Substances and Mixtures	21.2 Carcinogens and mutagens 21.3 Prevention and control of exposure	To update guidance following the issue of HSE Bulletin – Mild Steel Welding Fumes	<b>21.2.2</b> Additional bullet point; “welding fumes (see chapter 24, Hot Work) <b>21.3.2</b> Additional bullet point; “Local exhaust ventilation (to remove toxic fumes and therefore limit exposure)
Chapter 22 – Boarding Arrangements	22.5. Positioning of Boarding Arrangements 22.6.4 Rope Ladder  22.9.3 Safety line and harness	Pilot Ladders – Safe Rigging	<b>22.5.6</b> New sub-section for safety during the rigging process.  <b>22.6.4</b> Sentence amended; “A rope ladder should be secured to a certified fixing point...”  <b>22.9.3</b> Sentence amended; “A safety line and harness for those rigging the pilot ladder...”



	22.10 Safe rigging of pilot ladders  Annex 22.1 Standards for means of access		<b>22.10.1</b> Additional bullet points noting the certified fixed point and also ensuring steps and spacers do not become entrapped or twisted.  <b>Annex 22.1:</b> <b>4.2</b> Alteration of “fitted” to ‘installed’.  <b>4.7</b> Amendment to last sentence; “The stanchions should be not less than <u>32mm</u> in diameter and extend no less than 1.20 meters above <u>the deck to which it is fitted.</u> ”  <b>4.8</b> Amended sentence; “Where the freeboard of the ship is more than 9 meters, <u>a combination of accommodation and pilot ladders</u> must be provided on each side of the ship.”
Chapter 24 – Hot Work	24.3 Gas cutting  New sub-section;  24.5 Personal Protective Equipment	To update guidance following the issue of HSE Bulletin – Mild Steel Welding Fumes	<b>24.3.1</b> Second sentence; “Oxygen in the atmosphere can be depleted <u>and noxious gases may be produced</u> when using gas-cutting equipment.  <b>24.4 Welding</b> <b>24.4.1</b> “Exposure to welding fumes...” reference to PPE standard; <b>BS EN 12941/2: 1998+A2:2008</b> <b>24.5 PPE</b> (Sub-section number changed)  <b>24.5.1</b> Addition of the final sentence; “Where RPE is worn to prevent exposure to welding fumes, it must be compatible with other PPE being worn at the same time”. Additional bullet point; “where necessary to avoid exposure to welding fumes, RPE for toxic atmospheres; ..”
Chapter 32 – Ships Serving Offshore Renewables Installations	32.4 Safe means of access to installations	Updated to include reference to guidance from IMCA on; Safe Access M202.	<b>32.4.2</b> Third sentence of paragraph amended; “The arrangements during transfer must be compatible with the specific offshore installation and the operating company’s safety management system ...”  Added reference to IMCA M202 Means of access to installations.
Appendix 1 – Regulations, Marine Notices and Guidance Issued by the MCA		Out of date or incorrect references amended.	All references to Marine Notices, as have been reviewed and updated where appropriate
Appendix 2 - Other Sources of Information		Out of date or incorrect references amended.	<b>3.3.5</b> NHS Smoke free website, ‘E-cigarettes’ <a href="https://www.nhs.uk/smokefree/help-and-advice/e-cigarettes">https://www.nhs.uk/smokefree/help-and-advice/e-cigarettes</a>  Public Health England, ‘Evidence review of e-cigarettes and heated tobacco products 2018: executive summary’ <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publication/s/e-cigarettes-and-heated-tobacco-products-evidence-review/evidence-review-of-e-cigarettes-and-heated-tobacco-products-2018-executive-summary#poisonings-fires-and-explosions">https://www.gov.uk/government/publication/s/e-cigarettes-and-heated-tobacco-products-evidence-review/evidence-review-of-e-cigarettes-and-heated-tobacco-products-2018-executive-summary#poisonings-fires-and-explosions</a>



			<p><b>3.8.1</b> Reference to the Canadian Centre for Occupational Safety and Health  <a href="https://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/phys_agents/cold_working.html">https://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/phys_agents/cold_working.html</a></p> <p><b>9.4.6</b> IMO Resolution A.952(23) Graphical Symbols for Shipboard Fire Control Plans  <a href="http://www.imo.org/en/KnowledgeCentre/In dexofIMOResolutions/Assembly/Documents/A.952(23).pdf">http://www.imo.org/en/KnowledgeCentre/In dexofIMOResolutions/Assembly/Documents/A.952(23).pdf</a></p> <p><b>9.4.9</b> IMO Resolution A.1116(30) Escape Route Signs and Equipment Location Markings  <a href="http://www.imo.org/en/KnowledgeCentre/In dexofIMOResolutions/Assembly/Documents/A.1116%2830%29.pdf">http://www.imo.org/en/KnowledgeCentre/In dexofIMOResolutions/Assembly/Documents/A.1116%2830%29.pdf</a></p> <p><b>17.7</b> Reference added to <b>Appendix 2</b>;  <a href="http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/safetyto pics/scaffold.htm">http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/safetyto pics/scaffold.htm</a></p> <p><b>32.4.5</b> IMCA Guidance: Guidance on the Transfer of Offshore Personnel to and from Offshore Vessels and Structures - IMCA SEL 025 Rev 1, IMCA M 202 Rev 1:  <a href="http://www.imca-int.com">www.imca-int.com</a></p>
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