



Marine Notice No. 42 of 2023

Notice to all Shipowners, Agents, Shipmasters, Skippers, and Seafarers

Safe Manning Document – Merchant Ships

The Department of Transport wishes to advise that the Minister of State has signed Regulations entitled [Merchant Shipping \(SOLAS V – Safe Manning and Watchkeeping\) Regulations 2023](#) on 13 June 2023 (S.I. No. 314 of 2023). These Regulations come into operation on 1 July 2023.

The Regulations apply to vessels of 100gt or more. This will mean that from 1 July 2023 every vessel of 100gt or more must apply to the Marine Survey Office for a safe manning document. The application for a safe manning document can be found on the Department's website [here](#). Note, ships between 100gt and 500gt will have a six-month grace period in which to comply with this requirement and must have a safe manning document issued by the MSO on board the vessel by 1 January 2024 before proceeding to sea.

These Regulations do not apply to ships of war, troopships, fishing vessels, or pleasure craft not engaged in trade.

The Regulations expand on the requirements set out in [Chapter 6](#) of the Merchant Shipping Act 2010 for an owner of a ship to apply for a safe manning document setting out the number and qualification of each seafarer that will be employed aboard the vessel to ensure it can be operated safely and the factors that need to be taken into consideration when determining the appropriate manning levels. They also require that an official language for the vessel be set, and that English be used for ship to shore safety communications. Chapter 6 also refers to [Guidelines](#) for the application of principles for the appropriate minimum safe manning of ships.

In addition, the Regulations set out the requirements to carry appropriate documentation on board the vessel regarding each seafarer, to ensure appropriate watchkeeping arrangements are put in place while the vessel is in port and when carrying hazardous cargo and link these requirements to those set out in the Code on the Standards for the Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for seafarers (STCW).

Shipowners and masters are reminded that after a minimum safe manning document has issued, no change is permitted to the manning of the ship without the prior approval of the Minister.

In addition, a minimum safe manning document will no longer be valid if the ship to which it relates changes its area of operation, its machinery or equipment or its operation and maintenance. In such instances, the shipowner should make a new application to the MSO.

The Statutory Instrument may be purchased by mail order from Government Publications, Office of Public Works, Mountshannon Road, Dublin, D08 XA06 Tel: (046) 9423100. They are also available online at: www.irishstatutebook.ie.

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For any technical assistance in relation to this Marine Notice, please contact:
The Marine Survey Office, email: MSO@transport.gov.ie.
For general enquiries, please contact the Maritime Safety Policy Division, email:
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Written enquiries concerning Marine Notices should be addressed to:
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