



Marine Notice No. 43 of 2023

Amended 22/02/2024

Notice to all Fishing Vessel Owners, Agents, Skippers, Fishers and Seafarers

Safe Manning Document – Fishing Vessels

1. Safe Manning Regulations

The Department of Transport wishes to advise that the Minister for Transport has signed Regulations entitled [European Union \(International Labour Organisation Work in Fishing Convention\) \(Safe Manning\) Regulations 2024 \(S.I. No. 52 of 2024\)](#) on 16 February 2024. These new FV Safe Manning Regulations came into force on 16 February 2024 and revoke and replace the European Union (International Labour Organisation Work in Fishing Convention) (Safe Manning) Regulations 2023 (S.I. No. 315 of 2023).

The FV Safe Manning Regulations transpose Article 10 of the Annex to Council Directive (EU) 2017/159 of 19 December 2016 concerning the Work in Fishing Convention 2007 of the International Labour Organisation.

2. Application

The FV Safe Manning Regulations apply to any sea-going ship or boat of 15 metres in length overall and over registered in the State, of any nature whatsoever, irrespective of the form of ownership, used or intended to be used for the purpose of commercial fishing in the limited and unlimited areas.

3. Regulation Requirements

The Regulations provide for the safe manning of fishing vessels of 15 metres in length overall and over. The Regulations oblige the owner of every relevant fishing vessel to secure a minimum safe manning document from the Marine Survey Office (MSO) of the Department of Transport, and to carry that safe manning document on board the vessel at all times.

4. Competent Authority

The MSO is designated as the competent authority in the State for the purposes of these Regulations.

5. Application for a Minimum Safe Manning Document

An application for a minimum safe manning document should be sent to the MSO and should contain proposals as to the numbers and qualifications of deck officers, engineer officers and similar personnel the owner considers should be carried on board the fishing vessel to ensure it is sufficiently and safety manned for safe navigation and operation and appropriate working and living conditions for personnel on board. When it is satisfied with the proposals, the MSO will issue a minimum safe manning document for the vessel. Thereafter, the fishing vessel must be manned at all times to at least the level set out in the document, unless the MSO approves changes to it.

6. Working Language

The owner or master of each applicable fishing vessel must ensure that there is a working language on board, that every fisher understands it and that, where necessary, fishers can give orders and instructions and report back in that language.

7. Watchkeeping Arrangements

Any person in charge of a navigational watch must hold an appropriate certificate of competency or certificate of equivalent competency. In the event of the death or incapacity of any officer certified under the [Fishing Vessels \(Certification of Deck Officers and Engineer Officers\) Regulations 2023 \(S.I. 313 of 2023\)](#), a deck officer or engineer officer who is not certified to act in that capacity may act in the certificated capacity until the vessel reaches the next intended port of call.

8. Offences

There are a number of offences under the FV Safe Manning Regulations as follows:

- An owner who fails to ensure that their vessel is under the control of a competent skipper commits an offence;
- An owner who fails to ensure that their vessel has a valid minimum safe manning document, that the vessel does not proceed to sea without such a document and that the vessel is manned at all times to at least the level required by the document commits an offence;
- An owner who reduces the manning of their vessel below the level required by the minimum safe manning document without the MSO's approval commits an offence;
- A person who prevents, obstructs, impedes or delays an authorised officer in the performance of his or her functions under the Regulations, fails to comply with a requirement or request of an authorised officer or gives an authorised officer any information which is false or misleading and knows it to be so commits an offence;
- The master of a vessel who fails to comply with a notice of detention served on him or her by an authorised officer commits an offence;
- A person who fails to comply with a direction served by the MSO commits an offence.

Proceedings for an offence under the Regulation may be brought and prosecuted summarily by the Minister. A summary conviction of any of the above offences may lead to the imposition of a class A fine.

The European Union (International Labour Organisation Work in Fishing Convention) (Safe Manning) Regulations 2024 (S.I. No. 52 of 2023) may be purchased by mail order from Government Publications, Office of Public Works, 52 St. Stephen's Green, Dublin 2; Tel: (01) 6476834/1890-213434. It is 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:
MaritimeSafetyPolicyDivision@transport.gov.ie.
Written enquiries concerning Marine Notices should be addressed to:
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