



REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

MARITIME ADMINISTRATOR

Marine Guideline

No. 2-11-23

Feb/2025

**TO: ALL SHIPOWNERS, OPERATORS, MASTERS AND OFFICERS OF
MERCHANT SHIPS, AND RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATIONS**

SUBJECT: Protection Against Noise

- References:**
- (a) **SOLAS**, *International Convention on the Safety of Life at Sea*, Consolidated Edition 2024
 - (b) **Maritime Labour Convention**, [MLC, 2006](#),
 - (c) **IMO Resolution A.468(XII)**, *Code on Noise Levels on Board Ships*, adopted 19 November 1981
 - (d) **IMO Resolution MSC.337(91)**, *Adoption of the Code on Noise Levels on Board Ships*, adopted 30 November 2012
 - (e) **IMO Circular MEPC.1/Circ.906/Rev.1**, *Revised guidelines for the reduction of underwater radiated noise from shipping to address adverse impacts on marine life*, issued 15 November 2024
 - (f) **IMO Circular MEPC.1/Circ.907**, *Guidelines for Underwater Radiated Noise Reduction in Inuit Nunaat and the Arctic*, issued 3 October 2023
 - (g) **RMI Yacht Code 2021** ([MI-103](#))
 - (h) **RMI Marine Notice 7-044-1**, *Accommodations, Recreational Facilities, Food, Catering and Water*
 - (i) **RMI Marine Notice 7-049-1**, *Shipboard Occupational Health and Safety, including Hazardous Work Issues for Seafarers Under 18 Years Old*

PURPOSE

This Marine Guideline (MG) highlights the international instruments and the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) Maritime Administrator's (the "Administrator's") documents that contain the requirements and guidance for noise on board ships and underwater radiated noise (URN).

This MG amends rev. Jan/2024 to incorporate the latest International Maritime Organization (IMO) Circular [MEPC.1/Circ.906/Rev.1](#). Additionally, §2.6 has been introduced to address the IMO Unified Interpretations (UIs) of the Noise Code.

APPLICABILITY

This MG is applicable to all RMI-flagged vessels.

GUIDANCE

1.0 SOLAS

The requirements for protection against noise are found in SOLAS regulation II-1/3-12. The application of the requirements is dependent on the ship's construction and delivery dates.

2.0 The Noise Code

- 2.1 Ships subject to SOLAS regulation II-1/3-12.2¹ are required to take measures to reduce machinery noise in machinery spaces to acceptable levels. The suggested methods of controlling noise exposure are provided in IMO Resolution [A.468\(XII\)](#).
- 2.2 Ships subject to SOLAS regulation II-1/3-12.1² are required to be constructed to reduce onboard noise and to protect personnel from the noise in accordance with IMO Resolution MSC.337(91), ("the Code").
- 2.3 The Code was developed for conventional passenger and cargo ships. It does not apply to:
 - .1 dynamically supported craft;
 - .2 high-speed craft;
 - .3 fishing vessels;
 - .4 pipe-laying barges;
 - .5 crane barges;
 - .6 mobile offshore drilling units;
 - .7 pleasure yachts not engaged in trade;
 - .8 ships of war and troopships;
 - .9 ships not propelled by mechanical means;
 - .10 pile driving vessels; and
 - .11 dredgers.

¹ Ships delivered before 1 July 2018 and contracted for construction before 1 July 2014 and the keels of which are laid or which are at a similar stage of construction on or after 1 January 2009, or in the absence of a building contract, the keels of which are laid, or which are at a similar stage of construction on or after 1 January 2009 but before 1 January 2015.

² Ships of 1,600 GT or more contracted for construction on or after 1 July 2014, or in the absence of a building contract, the keels of which are laid or at a similar stage of construction on or after 1 January 2015, or delivered on or after 1 July 2018, unless the Administration deems that compliance with a particular provision is unreasonable or impractical.

- 2.4 The Code may, but is not required to, be applied to new ships³ of less than 1,600 GT as far as reasonable and practical, as per Code §1.3.3.
- 2.5 Although the Code is treated as a mandatory instrument under SOLAS, some provisions remain recommendatory, provide options for compliance, or are informative. A list of them can be found in Code §1.1.3.
- 2.6 To facilitate the global and consistent implementation of the Code, the Administrator agrees to the application of the following IMO UIs:
- .1 IMO Circular [MSC.1/Circ.1509/Rev.1](#) – *Unified interpretations of the Code on Noise levels on board Ships (Resolution MSC.337(91))*; and
 - .2 IMO Circular [MSC.1/Circ.1654](#) – *Unified interpretations of the noise level limit in workshops on board ships*.
- 2.7 Ship operators should familiarize themselves with the Code, including:
- .1 Chapter 5 - Noise Exposure Limits (non-mandatory);
 - .2 Chapter 7 - Hearing Protection and Warning Information (§7.3 is non-mandatory); and
 - .3 Appendix 2 - Guidance on the Inclusion of Noise Issues in Safety Management Systems.
- 2.8 The Code requires a noise survey report to be available on board each ship.⁴

3.0 URN Guidelines

- 3.1 The revised guidelines on the reduction of URN (IMO Circular [MEPC.1/Circ.906/Rev.1](#)) may be applied to any ship, considering their design and construction, modifications, and operation.
- 3.2 The URN guidelines focus on identifying primary contributors to ship-generated URN and address general approaches that can be undertaken to reduce such noise for new builds and existing ships. More specifically, the guidelines:
- .1 recommend URN Management Planning at the earliest design stages and for existing ships, as far as reasonable and practicable.
 - .2 include a useful table⁵ summarizing the design, technical, operational, and maintenance URN reduction approaches.

³ **New ship** means a ship to which the Noise Code applies in accordance with SOLAS regulation II-1/3-12.1.

⁴ The survey items for noise are addressed in IMO Resolution A.1186(33), *Survey Guidelines under the Harmonized System of Survey and Certification (HSSC)*.

⁵ See IMO Circular [MEPC.1/Circ.906/Rev.1](#) Table 1, page 9.

- .3 highlight the interrelationships between energy efficiency, greenhouse gas emissions, and URN reduction.

- 3.3 Ship operators and Masters should implement, as appropriate, the operational adjustments and maintenance measures identified in the guidelines. This includes taking into consideration the guidelines for addressing URN in Inuit Nunaat and the Arctic (IMO Circular [MEPC.1/Circ.907](#)).

4.0 MLC, 2006

[MLC, 2006](#) Standard [A3.1.6\(h\)](#) requires addressing the risk of exposure to hazardous levels of noise and vibration in accommodation, recreational, and catering facilities. The related guidance is found in Guidelines [B3.1.12](#) and [B4.3.2](#). See Marine Notice (MN) [2-011-33](#) for the applicability of the MLC, 2006 to RMI-flagged vessels.

5.0 Administrator Requirements

The Administrator's requirements on noise and vibration are found in:

Document	Location
RMI Yacht Code 2021 (MI-103)	Chapter II (for commercial yachts)
	Chapter III (for passenger yachts)
MN 7-044-1, Accommodations, Recreational Facilities, Food, Catering, and Water	§4.0
MN 7-049-1, Shipboard Occupational Health and Safety, including Hazardous Work Issues for Seafarers Under 18 Years Old	§2.3.4