



REPUBLIC OF
THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

MARITIME ADMINISTRATOR

Marine Guideline

No. 2-11-23

Jan/2024

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 2020
 - (b) [MLC, 2006](#), **Maritime Labour Convention**, 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**, *Revised guidelines for the reduction of underwater radiated noise from shipping to address adverse impacts on marine life*, issued 22 August 2023
 - (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 where to find the international instruments and the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) Maritime Administrator (the “Administrator”) documents that contain the requirements and guidance for noise on board ships and underwater radiated noise (URN).

APPLICABILITY

This MG is for use by all RMI-flagged vessels.

GUIDANCE

1.0 SOLAS

The requirements for protection against noise are found in SOLAS II-1/3-12. The application of the requirements is dependent upon their construction and delivery dates.

2.0 The Noise Codes

- 2.1 SOLAS II-1/3-12.2 requires ships delivered before 1 July 2018 with certain construction and keel laying dates to take measures to reduce machinery noise in machinery spaces to acceptable levels. The suggested methods of controlling noise exposure are provided in IMO Assembly Resolution [A.468\(XII\)](#).
- 2.2 SOLAS II-1/3-12.3 requires certain ships¹ to be constructed to reduce onboard noise and to protect personnel from the noise in accordance with the [Noise Code](#).
- 2.3 The Noise Code was developed for conventional passenger and cargo ships. It applies to ships 1,600 gross tons (GT) and above as specified in SOLAS, Chapter II-1 Regulation 3-12. It does not apply to:
 - (a) dynamically supported craft;
 - (b) high-speed craft;
 - (c) fishing vessels;
 - (d) pipe-laying barges;
 - (e) crane barges;
 - (f) mobile offshore drilling units;
 - (g) pleasure yachts not engaged in trade;
 - (h) ships of war and troopships;
 - (i) ships not propelled by mechanical means;
 - (j) pile driving vessels; and
 - (k) dredgers.
- 2.4 The Noise Code may, but is not required to be, applied to new ships² of less than 1,600 GT as far as reasonable and practical, as per Noise Code §1.3.3.
- 2.5 Although the Noise Code is treated as a mandatory instrument under SOLAS, there are some provisions that remain recommendatory, provide options for compliance, or are informative. A list of these provisions can be found in Noise Code §1.1.3.
- 2.6 Ship operators should familiarize themselves with the Noise Code, including:
 - .1 Chapter 5 - Noise Exposure Limits (non-mandatory)
 - .2 Chapter 7 - Hearing Protection and Warning Information (§7.3 is non-mandatory)
 - .3 Appendix 2 - Guidance on the Inclusion of Noise Issues in Safety Management Systems

¹ Ships of 1,600 GT or more contracted for building on or after 1 July 2014, 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.

² *New ship* means a ship to which the Noise Code applies in accordance with SOLAS regulation II-1/3-12.1.

2.7 The Noise Code on Noise Levels requires a noise survey report to be available on board each ship.³

3.0 URN Guidelines

3.1 The guidelines on the reduction of URN (IMO Circular [MEPC.1/Circ.906](#)) 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 table⁴ summarizing the design, technical, operational, and maintenance URN reduction approaches.
- .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. Refer to 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 , <i>Accommodations, Recreational Facilities, Food, Catering, and Water</i>	Section 6.0
MN 7-049-1 , <i>Shipboard Occupational Health and Safety, including Hazardous Work Issues for Seafarers Under 18 Years Old</i>	Section 2.3.4

³ The survey items for noise are addressed in IMO Resolution A.1186(33), *Survey Guidelines under the Harmonized System of Survey and Certification (HSSC)*.

⁴ See IMO Circular [MEPC.1/Circ.906](#), table 1, page 9.