



**REPUBLIC OF
THE MARSHALL ISLANDS**
MARITIME ADMINISTRATOR

Marine Notice

No. 2-011-35

Rev. Feb/2022

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

SUBJECT: National Safety Requirements for Offshore Supply Vessels

- References:**
- (a) **SOLAS**, *International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, Consolidated Edition 2020*
 - (b) **MARPOL**, *International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, Consolidated Edition 2017*, as amended
 - (c) **IMO Assembly Resolution [A.863\(20\)](#)**, *Code of safe practice for the carriage of cargoes and persons by offshore supply vessels (OSV Code)*, adopted 27 November 1997, and amended by IMO Resolution [MSC.237\(82\)](#), adopted 01 December 2006
 - (d) **IMO Assembly Resolution [A.1122\(30\)](#)**, *Code for the Transport and Handling of Hazardous and Noxious Liquid Substances in Bulk on Offshore Support Vessels (OSV Chemical Code)*, adopted 18 December 2017
 - (e) **IMO Resolution [MSC.235\(82\)](#)**, *Guidelines for the design and construction of offshore supply vessels, 2006*, adopted 01 December 2006, and amended by IMO Resolution [MSC.335\(90\)](#), adopted 22 May 2012
 - (f) **RMI Marine Notice [2-011-36](#)**, *National Safety Requirements for Vessels Carrying Persons in Addition to Crew*
 - (g) **RMI Marine Notice [5-034-1](#)**, *Safety Inspections Program*
 - (h) **RMI Marine Guideline [2-13-8](#)**, *Guidance on the Application of MARPOL, Annex II to Offshore Support Vessel*

PURPOSE

This Notice addresses offshore supply vessel (OSV) design, construction, and operation. It specifically:

- establishes an equivalent standard to the SOLAS passenger ship requirements;
- establishes and clarifies the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) safety requirements; and
- standardizes the procedures for issuing a National Cargo Ship Document of Compliance to vessels supporting offshore energy exploration, drilling, production, and which carry more than 12 persons in addition to the crew.

This Notice supersedes revision Jul/18. It reflects:

- the addition of “floating offshore wind turbine” to the definition of offshore installation;
- a new section §8.0 on the International Safety Management Code; and
- incorporates a reference in §16.1 to Marine Guideline [2-13-8](#).

BACKGROUND

Under SOLAS, a vessel of any tonnage that carries more than 12 passengers on an international voyage is defined as a passenger ship.

OSVs, and the similar crew boats, often carry more than 12 offshore workers (normally consisting of offshore installation crewmembers and marine service providers). SOLAS considers these persons as passengers rather than crew because they do not perform a function onboard. Therefore, these vessels are required to comply with the SOLAS passenger vessel regulations.

However, in most circumstances these vessels differ greatly from the typical SOLAS passenger ship. They are relatively small, coastal vessels serving in support of energy exploration and production in offshore oil and gas fields around the world. They are used to transport equipment, supplies, stores, industrial fluids, and personnel between shore-based-facilities and offshore installations. The extra persons carried are not typical passengers, but primarily industrial personnel, trained for the marine environment, and experienced in emergency and evacuation procedures.

Recognizing these vessels’ unique design features and service characteristics, the RMI Maritime Administrator (the “Administrator”) has established an equivalent standard to the SOLAS passenger ship requirements to promote OSV vessel and personnel safety.

APPLICABILITY

This Notice applies to each vessel of any gross tonnage and voyage that:

- is self-propelled by machinery;
- in addition to the crew, regularly carries persons who perform functions in support of exploration, exploitation, or production of offshore energy resources; and
- carries the products identified in IMO Assembly Resolution [A.1122\(30\)](#) §1.1.9.

This Notice does not apply to vessels:

- engaged in passenger trade;
- certified under the Mobile Offshore Drilling Unit (MODU) Codes; or
- certified under the Code of Safety for Special Purpose Ships, 2008 ([2008 SPS Code](#)).

DEFINITIONS

Authorized person – means those persons, other than offshore workers, carried aboard an OSV to an offshore installation to perform a task, including maintenance, service, or a function related to energy exploration and production conducted at the site.

Crew – means all persons carried on board the ship to provide navigation and maintenance of the ship, its machinery, systems, and arrangements essential for propulsion and safe navigation or to provide services for other persons on board. It does not include those persons identified as Special Personnel or Industrial Personnel.

Crew Boat – means a vessel which is *primarily* used for the transportation of personnel to, from and between offshore installations. These vessels are typically arranged to also have capacity to deliver limited amounts of stores, materials, or equipment.

Near coastal voyage – means a voyage in the vicinity of the coast of a State as defined by the Competent Authority of that State. In no case shall this include voyages greater than 200 nautical miles from the nearest port of refuge.

Offshore installation – means a marine structure located at an offshore site. The term includes: fixed production platforms; floating production platforms; floating storage units; any unit certificated as a mobile offshore unit (MOU); accommodation units; floating production, storage and operations units (FPSO, FSO, FSU or MOSU); floating offshore wind turbines, and maintenance units.

Offshore Supply Vessel (OSV) – means a vessel which is used for the transportation of stores, materials, equipment, or personnel to, from, and between offshore installations. These vessels are sometimes categorized as **offshore support vessels**. For the purposes of this Notice the term also includes crew boats.

Offshore worker – means an individual carried aboard an OSV and employed in a phase of exploration, exploitation, or production of offshore mineral or energy resources on or at an offshore installation. The term does not include the Master or a member of the crew engaged in the regular marine operations of the vessel.

Special personnel – means all persons who are not crewmembers or passengers and children under one year of age and who are carried on board in connection with the special purpose of that ship or because of special work being carried out aboard it.

REQUIREMENTS

1.0 General

- 1.1 All vessels to which this Notice applies must be designed and constructed in accordance with IMO Resolution [MSC.235\(82\)](#), as amended by IMO Resolution [MSC.335\(90\)](#).
- 1.2 Vessels intending to carry more than 12 persons (industrial personnel) must also comply with the requirements of IMO Assembly Resolution [A.863\(20\)](#), as amended by IMO Resolution [MSC.237\(82\)](#), and RMI Marine Notice [2-011-36](#).

2.0 Authorization

- 2.1 Any owner or operator intending to operate a vessel under the conditions of this Notice must receive specific authorization from the Administrator.
- 2.2 Each proposed use of this standard must be forwarded, with a recommendation from the vessel's Recognized Organization (RO), to the Administrator for consideration.
- 2.3 This request must at a minimum include:
 - .1 a general arrangement plan;
 - .2 capacity and arrangement of all lifesaving appliances;
 - .3 a detailed scope of operations including area of operations; and
 - .4 proposed manning and the capacity to carry additional personnel. The proposed manning description must detail all persons onboard, including crew, special personnel, industrial personnel, and any passengers.

3.0 Surveys

- 3.1 The survey's scope must be sufficient for the surveyor to verify that the vessel and its equipment are in satisfactory condition for its intended service.
- 3.2 The survey must include an inspection of firefighting equipment, lifesaving equipment and an operational check of the radio equipment.
- 3.3 Maintaining active Class status will provide verification of hull integrity, watertight closing arrangements, and machinery status.

4.0 Certification

- 4.1 All surveys necessary for issuance and maintenance of the validity of the National Offshore Supply Vessel Document of Compliance (Certificate) must be carried out by the vessel's RO.
- 4.2 The Certificate must be issued to all vessels only upon completion of an Initial Survey which is carried out concurrently with the surveys required for registration.
- 4.3 The Certificate will be issued for a five-year validity. This runs concurrently with the five-year classification period between Special Surveys but is subject to annual verification surveys by the RO, who must endorse the Certificate accordingly.
- 4.4 The Annual Survey must be conducted within three months before and three months after each anniversary date of the Initial or Renewal Survey.
- 4.5 Cargo vessels of 500 gross tonnage and above must *also* be issued appropriate SOLAS statutory documents (Safety Construction, Safety Equipment and Supplement) using "Cargo Ship other than any of the above (OSV)" as type of ship.
- 4.6 For any OSV carrying more than 12 persons in addition to the crew, the Certificate must be annotated:
 - .1 voyages not greater than 200 nautical miles from the coast, and;
 - .2 carriage of persons in addition to the crew must be limited to authorized personnel and offshore workers.

5.0 Initial and Annual Safety Inspections

The Safety Inspection procedures applicable to all RMI-flagged vessels must be followed according to RMI Marine Notice [5-034-1](#).

6.0 Modifications and Alterations

No modifications or alterations will be required of existing approved arrangements. However, where the equipment provision falls below generally accepted international standards or normal good shipbuilding practice, the Administrator, in consultation with the relevant RO and the owner, must specify the number and/or type of equipment to be carried.

7.0 Radio Equipment

- 7.1 All certificated vessels must comply with the SOLAS IV/4 radiocommunication requirements, unless alternative arrangements are approved by the Administrator.

7.2 Cargo Ships over 300 gross tonnage must also comply with the requirements of SOLAS Chapter IV (GMDSS¹) and SOLAS Chapter V/19.1 (LRIT²).

8.0 International Safety Management (ISM) Code

Vessels not subject to mandatory compliance with the ISM Code may do so voluntarily. See RMI Marine Notice [2-011-13](#).

9.0 International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code

Vessels not subject to mandatory compliance with the ISPS Code may do so voluntarily. This includes cargo ships, such as OSVs, 300 gross tonnage or above but less than 500 gross tonnage (ITC 69). See RMI Marine Notice [2-011-16](#).

10.0 Load Lines

10.1 All certificated vessels must comply with the requirements of the International Convention on Load Lines, 1966, as amended, with the sole exception of the requirements for marking and freeboard computation, unless alternative arrangements are approved by the Administrator.

10.2 New vessels of 24 meters or more in length and existing vessels of 150 gross tonnage and above engaged on any international voyage must carry an International Load Line Certificate. This is in addition to carrying the National Cargo Ship Document of Compliance

11.0 Stability

11.1 The intact and damage stability, and the subdivision of any OSV must generally comply with the requirements of IMO Resolution [MSC.235\(82\)](#), as amended by IMO Resolution [MSC.335\(90\)](#).

11.2 The intact and damage stability, and the subdivision of any vessel intending to carry more than 12 persons in addition to the crew must generally comply with the requirements of Chapter 2 of the 2008 SPS Code. See IMO Resolutions [MSC.266\(84\)](#), [MSC.299\(87\)](#), and [MSC.408\(96\)](#).

12.0 International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL)

All vessels must fully comply with the requirements of MARPOL.

1. Global Maritime Distress and Safety System

2. Long Range Tracking and Identification.

13.0 Lifesaving

- 13.1 The vessel must comply with the relevant provisions for cargo ships contained in Chapter III of SOLAS.
- 13.2 All lifesaving appliances and arrangements must be in accordance with Chapter III of SOLAS and the Lifesaving Appliances Code.
- 13.3 Lifejackets - a lifejacket must be provided for each person on board. Additional lifejackets must also be provided to each watchstander at the watch locations.
- 13.4 Immersion suits – unless the vessel is operating exclusively between 30° North and 30° South latitudes and an exemption certificate has been issued by the vessel’s RO, an immersion suit must be provided for each person on board. Additional immersion suits must also be provided to each watchstander at the watch locations.
- 13.5 Lifeboats – Vessels greater than 85 meters in length, or any vessel carrying more than 60 persons total, must be equipped with SOLAS lifeboats of sufficient capacity to accommodate all on board.
- 13.6 Life Rafts:
 - .1 Vessels must carry one or more life rafts with an aggregate capacity that will accommodate the total number of persons on board.
 - .2 Life rafts must be stowed in a position providing for easy side-to-side transfer at a single open deck level or additional life rafts must be provided to bring the total capacity available on each side to at least 100 percent of the total persons on board.
- 13.7 Rescue boats – all vessels must be equipped with at least one SOLAS rescue boat. An additional rescue boat may be required depending on total persons carried, route, and vessel type.

14.0 Accommodations

- 14.1 For voyages over 12 hours, suitable overnight accommodations must be provided for each person on board.
- 14.2 In any case where temporary or portable accommodations are employed, they must be to the same, or equivalent, construction standard for the structure, heating and ventilation, egress, water and weather tightness, safety systems, and sanitary facilities, as provided on the vessel for its intended service.

15.0 Navigation Lights

- 15.1 Due to the special construction and purpose of OSVs, it is typically difficult for the navigation lights arrangement to meet the *Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, 1972* (COLREGS) with regard to:
- .1 location of the sternlight, aft anchor light, and towing light (Rule 21 (c), 30 (a)(ii));
 - .2 second mast-light (Rule 23 (a)(ii), Annex I Paragraphs 2(a) and (b), and 3(a)); and
 - .3 vertical spacing of lights (Annex I Paragraph 2 (ii)).
- 15.2 Where navigation light arrangements do not meet COLREGS, the Administrator authorizes the RO to issue to these vessels a full-term exemption certificate in accordance with RMI Technical Circular [No. 4](#). Provided that:
- .1 all alternative measures regarding placement of the stern light as far aft as possible; and
 - .2 the anchor light is as high as possible;
 - .3 proper illumination is provided for the aft working deck at night while at anchor or underway; and
 - .4 these items are listed on the exemption certificate when issued.

16.0 Transport and Handling of Limited Amounts of Hazardous and Noxious Liquid Substances in Bulk

- 16.1 All OSVs carrying noxious liquid substances in bulk are subject to the requirements of Annex II of MARPOL, as amended. The Codes contained in IMO Assembly Resolutions [A.863\(20\)](#), as amended by IMO Resolution [MSC.237\(82\)](#), and [A.1122\(30\)](#) must be followed. Refer to MG [2-13-8](#) for further guidance.
- 16.2 Following a satisfactory initial survey of an OSV, the Administrator's duly authorized RO will issue a certificate, the model form of which is set out in Appendix 1 of [A.1122\(30\)](#), suitably endorsed to certify compliance with the provisions of the OSV Chemical Code. The certificate must indicate the cargoes regulated by the Code that the OSV is permitted to carry with any relevant carriage conditions and must have a validity not exceeding five years.
- 16.3 The certificate issued under the OSV Chemical Code must have the same force and receive the same recognition as the certificate issued under regulation 7 of MARPOL Annex II and regulations VII/10 and VII/13 of SOLAS.
- 16.4 The validity of the certificate referred to in §15.3 must be subject to the renewal, intermediate, annual, and additional surveys required by the IBC Code, the IGC Code, and MARPOL Annex II.