

# Republic of the Marshall Islands

## MARITIME ADMINISTRATOR

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### YACHT SAFETY ADVISORY No. 06-23

**To: Yacht Owners/Captains, Managers, Agents, Recognized Class Societies and Appointed Representatives**

**Subject: COMPLIANCE WITH THE CONVENTION ON THE INTERNATIONAL REGULATIONS FOR PREVENTING COLLISIONS AT SEA (COLREGS) RULE 10 AND DESIGNATED ROUTING MEASURES**

**Date: 29 August 2023**

The Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) Maritime Administrator (the “Administrator”) has recently received multiple reports from coastal State maritime authorities about contraventions by yachts of COLREGs, Rule 10 (Traffic Separation Schemes (TSS)). Although these contraventions did not result in a hazardous situation, they are of concern since they have the potential to increase the risk of collision.

The purpose of TSSs and other ship routing measures is to contribute to the safety of navigation and protection of the marine environment through established predetermined routes. They are typically intended for use by ships, not smaller vessels. Importantly, COLREGs Rule 10(h) provides that “a vessel not using a traffic separation scheme shall avoid it by as wide a margin as practicable.”

### **Voyage Planning**

The Administrator strongly recommends that yacht Captains and officers responsible for preparing voyage plans take the following into consideration when planning a voyage in the proximity of a TSS or designated routing measure:

1. that vessels less than 20 meters in length and sailing vessels may use an inshore traffic zone, as provided by the COLREGs Rule 10(d), and thus, avoid using a TSS or other routing measure, unless required to do so for safety of navigation;
2. consult the IMO Ships’ Routeing (2019 Edition) or applicable sailing directions to ensure that any planned routes that are in or near a TSS or other routing measure comply with the applicable requirements; and
3. ensure that any planned route that is in or near a TSS complies with COLREGs Rule 10.

This YSA is evaluated annually by the Administrator and expires one year after its issuance or renewal unless otherwise noted, superseded, or revoked.

## Guidance to Captains

The Administrator recommends that yacht Captains who may be required to navigate in or near a TSS or other routing measure:

1. review COLREGs Rule 10 with the yacht’s navigation watch officers, including to ensure they understand that:

<b>Applicable Rules</b>	<b>Application of Rules</b>
COLREGs Rule 10(c)	Crossing a TSS must be avoided so far as practicable, “but if obliged to do so shall cross on a heading as nearly as practicable at right angles to the general direction of traffic flow.” Sailing vessels and smaller vessels are not exempt from this rule.
COLREGs Rule 10(f)	Use particular caution when navigating near the termination of a TSS.
COLREGs Rule 10(j)	“A vessel of less than 20 meters in length or a sailing vessel shall not impede the safe passage of a power-driven vessel following a traffic lane.”
COLREGs Rules 10(k, l)	Rule 10(k) and 10(l) are not applicable, unless the yacht is engaged in the activities stated in those rules.

2. ensure a listening watch is maintained on the working channel for the Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) responsible for monitoring the TSS or other designated routing measures and VHF channel 16.
3. When a yacht experiences difficulties maintaining compliance with these requirements due to unforeseen or exceptional circumstance, the VTS and/or coastal State authorities must be contacted in accordance with reporting requirements.

## Enforcement

Coastal State maritime authorities closely monitor vessel traffic within a TSS, the surrounding waters, and other areas where there are designated routing measures. The Administrator is required by IMO Resolution [A.432\(XI\)](#) to investigate any contravention of the COLREGs reported by a coastal State. Such investigations can result in the Administrator taking administrative action against an officer’s RMI seafarer documentation. Coastal States may also conduct their own investigations and issue fines for contraventions occurring in their territorial waters.