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## **Maritime Labour Convention, 2006: Crew Accommodation, Supplementary Guidance**

**Notice to all Shipowners, Ship Operators, and Ship Managers; employers of seafarers; Masters, Officers, and Seafarers on seagoing ships ordinarily engaged in commercial operations, Ship builders and Yacht builders**

*This notice should be read with the Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour Convention) (Minimum Requirements for Seafarers etc.) Regulations 2014 (S.I. 2014/1613) and Merchant Shipping Notice MSN 1844 (M).*

*This note replaces MGN 481 (M)*

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### **Summary**

This note provides guidance to owners and operators of UK registered ships on how to comply with the requirements of Part 7 of the Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour Convention) (Minimum Requirements for Seafarers etc.) Regulations 2014 (S.I. 2014/1613) and MSN 1844 (M).

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Part 7 of the Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour Convention) (Minimum Requirements for Seafarers etc) Regulations 2014 (S.I. 2014/1613) (the “MLC Minimum Requirements Regulations”) implements in to UK law Regulation 3.1 of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006.
- 1.2 For ships constructed before the MLC Minimum Requirements Regulations came into force the requirements relating to ship construction and equipment that are set out in the relevant previous Regulations will continue to apply unless the crew accommodation is substantially altered.

## **2. General**

### 2.1 In the crew accommodation:

- a) all structures, furniture and fittings and means of access to and egress from the crew accommodation should be so situated, constructed and arranged as to minimise any risk of injury to the crew;



- b) to afford protection to the crew in rough sea conditions;
  - i. handrails should be provided in passageways and stairways where necessary and should be of robust construction and strongly secured to the bulkheads;
  - ii. fixed furniture should be strongly secured;
  - iii. means should be provided to secure portable furniture;
  - iv. doors, including those to cupboards and other items of furniture, should be so secured as not to open accidentally;
  - v. drawers should be so designed as not to slide open and fall out accidentally;
  - vi. tables, shelves, stowage racks, and other similar fittings should be fitted with retaining lips or bars or with non-slip surfaces so that objects placed on them will not slide off.

2.2 The arrangements for the storage, distribution and utilisation of gaseous fuel should reduce to a minimum the risk of fire or explosion within the crew accommodation.

2.3 Entrance to crew accommodation from the open deck should be protected against the weather and sea to the greatest possible extent practicable.

### **3. Divisions between the crew accommodation and other parts of the ship**

3.1 Where no other arrangements are practicable, an opening in a bulkhead separating a passageway in the crew accommodation from any of the spaces specified in MSN 1844 (M) paragraph 3.4 (d) and (e) or from a store room other than an engine room or deck store room may be accepted, if that opening is sealed in any way which is effective having regard to the use of the space.

3.2 Where crew accommodation adjoins an oil tank then the two should be separated by either a gastight steel division additional to the division which retains the oil; or by an all-welded steel division capable of withstanding a head of water at least 1.5 metres greater than the maximum service head.

### **4. Overhead decks**

4.1 External bulkheads of sleeping rooms and mess rooms should be adequately insulated. All machinery casings and boundary bulkheads of galleys and other spaces in which heat is produced should be adequately insulated where there is a possibility of resulting heat effects in adjoining accommodation or passageways.

4.2 Protection should be provided from the effects of heat resulting from steam or hot-water service pipes.

### **5. Pipes in Crew Accommodation**

5.1 Unless no other arrangement is reasonably practicable, steam supply and exhaust pipes for steering gear, winches and similar equipment should not pass through crew accommodation but where this is unavoidable they should pass through passageways and be properly encased.

5.2 Steam pipes that do pass through crew accommodation should be constructed of solid drawn steel or other suitable to be able to withstand the maximum pressure from the ship's boiler system. Be fitted with connections made by faced flanges, properly jointed and have adequate drainage arrangements.



- 5.3 Where necessary for the protection of the crew calorifiers, steam and hot water pipes in the crew accommodation should be lagged. Cold water pipes in the crew accommodation should be lagged where necessary to prevent condensation.
- 5.4 Pipes used for crew accommodation service should be fit for purpose. Soil and waste pipes should be constructed in order to minimise the risk of obstruction and to facilitate cleaning.
- 5.5 Soil pipes should not pass overhead in mess rooms, sleeping rooms, dry provision store rooms, galleys or the hospital, unless it is impracticable to place them elsewhere.
- 5.6 Soil or waste pipes should not pass through drinking water tanks or other fresh water tanks.
- 5.7 The scuppers serving sanitary accommodation and laundries should be at least 50 millimetres in diameter and must be placed wherever water is likely to collect on the floor.

## **6. Heating**

- 6.1 In all ships in which a heating system is required, the heating should be by means of hot water, warm air, electricity, steam or equivalent. However, within the accommodation area, steam should not be used as a medium for heat transmission.
- 6.2 The heating system should be capable of maintaining the temperature in the seafarer accommodation at a satisfactory level under normal conditions of weather and climate likely to be met to within the trade in which the ship is engaged.
- 6.3 Radiators or other heaters should be provided with a means for turning on and off or varying the temperature.
- 6.4 Heating equipment should be constructed so that its operation is not affected by propelling machinery, steering gear, deck machinery calorifiers or cooking appliances.
- 6.5 The system of heating the seafarer accommodation should be in operation at all times when seafarers are living or working on board and conditions require its use.
- 6.6 Radiators and avoid heating apparatus should be placed and where necessary shielded so as to avoid risk of fire, danger, or discomfort to the occupants.

## **7. Lighting**

- 7.1 If a reading light is fitted in a sleeping room, then it should be fitted with a lamp capable of emitting at least 200 lumens.
- 7.2 The electric lighting in sleeping rooms, day rooms, recreation rooms, rooms for watching films and television, hobbies and games rooms, mess rooms, hospital wards, offices, studies, sanitary accommodation, laundries, drying rooms, dry provision store rooms, cold store rooms, galleys, passageways, companionways and covered deck recreation spaces should be treated as adequate if:
- (a) the lamps, paintwork and other surface finishes are new, the illuminance in the horizontal plane when measured at points specified in respect of that space in the attached Annex is steady and maintained, subject to a tolerance of 10%, at a value stated in the Annex in respect of those points; and
  - (b) it complies with any other specifications within the Annex in respect of that space.



## **8. Ventilation**

8.1 Air-conditioning systems whether of a centralised or individual unit type should:

8.1.1 maintain the air at a satisfactory temperature and relative humidity as compared to outside air conditions, ensure sufficiency of air changes in all air-conditioned spaces, take account of the particular characteristics of operations at sea and not produce excessive noise or vibrations; and

8.1.2 facilitate easy cleaning and disinfection to prevent or control the spread of disease.

8.2 Power for the operation of the air-conditioning and other ventilation units should be available at all times.

## **9. Interior finishes**

9.1 Upholstered parts of furniture and fittings should be made from either polished hardwood or a rust-proof material, impervious to dirt and moisture, and which is not likely to warp, crack or become corroded.

9.2 Any wooden surfaces within crew accommodation such as panelling should be either painted, varnished or coated with another suitable product.

9.3 All paints, varnish and other surface finishes in the crew accommodation should be easily kept clean.

9.4 The interior of the crew accommodation and all furniture and fittings within it should not be able to harbour dirt or vermin.

## **10. Sleeping Rooms**

10.1 Where practicable, the following groups of persons should be provided with sleeping rooms separate from those provided for the other groups:

10.1.1 officers;

10.1.2 petty officers;

10.1.3 cadets;

10.1.4 ratings of the deck department other than petty officers;

10.1.5 ratings of the engine room department other than petty officers;

10.1.6 ratings of the catering department other than petty officers;

(Unless general purpose ratings are employed, the ratings in those two groups in subparagraphs (d) and (e) should be counted as one group).

10.2 When calculating the floor area of a sleeping room occupied by berths and lockers, chests of drawers and seats should be included. But small or irregularly shaped spaces which, do not effectively add to the space available for free movement, and cannot be used for installing furniture and should be excluded.



## **11. Beds**

- 11.1 The framework and lee-board, if any, of a berth should be of approved material, hard, smooth and not likely to corrode or to harbour vermin.
- 11.2 If tubular frames are used for the construction of berths, they should be completely sealed and without perforations, which would give access to vermin.
- 11.3 Where beds abut each other, they should be separated by rigid screens made of wood or other suitable opaque material.
- 11.4 Berths should not be arranged in tiers of more than two and the lower berth in a double tier should be not less than 30cm above the floor. The upper berth should be placed approximately midway between the bottom of the lower berth and the lower side of the deckhead beams.
- 11.5 In case of berths placed alongside the ship's side, there should be only a single tier where a sidelight is situated above a berth.
- 11.6 Where one berth is placed over another, a dust proof bottom should be fitted beneath the bottom mattress or spring bottom of the upper berth.

## **12. Mess Rooms**

- 12.1 Mess room facilities may be either common or separate. The decision in this respect should be taken after consultation with seafarers' and shipowners' representatives and subject to the approval of the MCA. Account should be taken of factors such as size of the ship and the distinctive cultural, religious and social needs of the seafarers.
- 12.2 Where separate mess rooms facilities are to be provided to seafarers, then separate mess rooms should be provided for:
- 12.2.1 master and officers; and
  - 12.2.2 petty officers and other seafarers.
- 12.3 On ships other than passenger ships, the floor area of mess rooms for seafarers should be not less than 1.5 square metres per person of the planned seating capacity.

## **13. Recreation Spaces**

- 13.1 Where practicable consideration should be given to including the following facilities at no extra cost to the seafarer:
- 13.1.1 a smoking room;
  - 13.1.2 television viewing and the reception of radio broadcasts;
  - 13.1.3 showing of films, the stock of which should be adequate for the duration of the voyage and where necessary changed at reasonable intervals;
  - 13.1.4 sports equipment including exercise equipment, table games and deck games;
  - 13.1.5 where possible, facilities for swimming;



- 13.1.6 a library containing vocational and other books, the stock of which should be adequate for the duration of the voyage and changed at reasonable intervals;
- 13.1.7 facilities for handicrafts;
- 13.1.8 electronic equipment such as a radio, television, video recorders, DVD/CD player, personal computer and software and cassette player/recorder;
- 13.1.9 where, appropriate, the provision of bars on board for seafarers unless these are contrary to national, religious or social customs; and
- 13.1.10 reasonable access to ship-to-shore telephone communications, email, internet facilities, where available, with any charges for use of these services being reasonable in amount.

#### **14. Sanitary Accommodation**

- 14.1 Semi-private bathrooms are to be situated on an inter-communicating compartment between two adjoining sleeping rooms or, if the bathroom is for ratings, it may be situated opposite or approximately opposite the entrance or entrances to their sleeping room or rooms.
- 14.2 (a) Semi-private bathrooms should contain a bath or shower, a water closet pedestal and other items as specified in MSN 1844 (M) paragraph 18.10 and, unless a washbasin is provided in each sleeping room for which the bathroom is appropriate, with a washbasin.  
  
(b) Private bathrooms should contain a bath or shower, a water closet pedestal, a washbasin and other items specified in MSN 1844 (M) paragraph 18.10.
- 14.3 Toilets should be situated convenient to, but separate from sleeping rooms and wash rooms, without direct access from the sleeping rooms or from a passage between sleeping rooms or from a passage between sleeping rooms and toilets to which there is no other access. This does not apply where a toilet is located in a compartment between two sleeping rooms having a total of not more than four seafarers.
- 14.4 Washbasins and tub baths should be of adequate size and constructed with a smooth surface not liable to crack, flake or corrode.
- 14.5 Where there is more than one toilet in a compartment they should be screened to ensure privacy wherever reasonably practicable the space screened should be large enough for one person to undress comfortably.
- 14.6 (a) Subject to sub-paragraph (b) below, if access to a water closet is from a passageway other than a passageway leading only to water closets a lobby, where practicable, be provided at the entrance to the water closet. If that is not practicable, the water closet should be provided with a self-closing door which is close fitting and has no apertures.  
  
(b) The above need not be complied with where adequate mechanical exhaust ventilation arrangements are provided in those spaces.
- 14.7 Subject to paragraph 14.8 below every water closet pedestal should be fitted in a closet separated from other parts of the crew accommodation by bulkheads which comply with requirements of paragraphs 4.1 and 4.2 of MSN 1844 (M).
- 14.8 A water closet need not be separated by bulkheads from:



14.8.1 another water closet;

14.8.2 a urinal or:

14.8.3 if the water closet is served by a trunked mechanical exhaust ventilation system which effectively removes odours from it, washing accommodation if it is separated from that other water closet, urinal or washing accommodation by a steel partition or another suitable material and open at the top and bottom. This is not necessary in a private or semi-private bathroom.

## **15. Supply of Drinking Water and Fresh Water**

15.1 Any manholes leading into drinking and fresh water storage tanks, and all pipes and other part of the distribution systems should be constructed to allow for efficient maintenance and prevention of contamination.

## **16. Galleys**

16.1 All spaces surrounding and behind fixed galley equipment should be easy to keep clean.

16.2 All galley furniture and fittings should be made of a material which is impervious to dirt and moisture. Any metal parts should be rustproof. The bottoms of all fitted furniture should be either flush with the deck or fitted high enough to enable the deck space beneath to be easily kept clean.

16.3 Sufficient gutters and scuppers should be fitted in the galley to ensure that it drains efficiently. Traps should be fitted to scuppers which should be led either overboard or to an enclosed tank which has a mechanical suction pump.

## **17. Dry Provision Store Rooms**

17.1 Dry provision store rooms should be situated, constructed and ventilated in order to minimise the risk of deterioration of the stores through heat, draught, condensation or infestation by insects or vermin. In particular a dry provision store should not:

17.1.1 be situated over propelling machinery space, boiler room or any other space which is subject to abnormal heat; or

17.1.2 adjoin a galley, propelling machinery space or other space which is subject to abnormal heat, unless the division between the store room and that space is adequately insulated.

17.2 Dry provision store rooms are only to be used for the storage of dry provisions.

## **18. Cold Store Rooms and Refrigerating Equipment**

18.1 It should be possible to effectively clean cold stores rooms and domestic style deep freezers and refrigerators. They should be large enough taking into account the size of the crew and the duration of the voyages.

18.2 Access to every cold store rooms should be a passageway, galley or pantry or from another cold store room.

18.3 Cold storage facilities should be served by refrigerating machinery which may be either independent of the facility or self-contained.



18.4 If independent machinery is fitted, then it should be separated from all other parts of the crew accommodation by bulkheads complying with the requirements of paragraphs 4.1 and 4.2 of MSN 1844 (M). The refrigeration machinery space should be by means of a hinged door from an open deck.

## 19. Hospitals

19.1 The arrangement of the entrance, berths, lighting, ventilation, heating and water supply should be designed to ensure that the comfort and facilitate the treatment of the occupants.

19.2 Ideally the minimum width of the entrance to any permanent hospital should be 760 millimetres and the access arrangements should be such that a stretcher can be easily carried into it and placed alongside at least one single tier bed.

19.3 Sufficient beds should be provided in permanent hospitals on a ratio of one bed per 50 (or fraction of) seafarers up to a maximum of 4 beds.

19.4 Any sidescuttles or windows in the ward which are exposed to the direct sunlight, should have curtains or blinds fitted.

19.5 Permanent hospital, even if they are air-conditioned or have a trunked mechanical ventilation system should have a natural system of inlet and exhaust ventilation to the open air which is independent of any ventilators provided for other parts of the ship.

19.6 A portable electrical lamp in addition to the lighting fitted in a permanent hospital should be provided and should be capable of emitting 600 lumens. If it is in a hospital ward, the lamp should be capable of emitting 400 lumens.

19.7 Each bed in the hospital ward should be provided with:

- (a) a locker approximately 305 millimetres square by 610 millimetres high fitted with a flat top and a shelf;
- (b) a water bottle;
- (c) a tumbler; and
- (d) an electric bell push communicating with the sleeping room of the doctor, nurse or other person in charge of the patient.

19.8 Hospital wards should have:

- (a) sufficient seats taking into account the number of beds in the ward;
- (b) a clothes locker (additional to any lockers provided in accordance with paragraph 19.7); and
- (c) a box cover to conceal a bed pan.

19.9 Sanitary accommodation should be provided for the exclusive use of the occupants of the hospital either as part of the accommodation or in close proximity. Such sanitary accommodation should comprise a minimum of one toilet, one washbasin and one tub or shower and in ships of 5,000 tons or over a bath at least 1.3 metres in internal length shall be fitted.





- 19.10 Washbasins and baths in a permanent hospital should be in accordance with the contents of paragraph 14.4 of this guidance note. Furthermore, unless the ship has a collecting tank or sewage plant the discharge system, where practicable should be separate from any other discharge system in the ship.
- 19.11 A scupper at least 50 millimetres in diameter should be fitted in the lowest part of any room in a hospital where a bath is fitted unless that room is the ward.
- 19.12 Any water closet or other room in which the water closet pedestal is fitted should have a gastight self-closing door, unless it is served by a trunked mechanical exhaust ventilation system, which effectively removes odours from it.
- 19.13 In passenger ships, one hospital may be provided to serve both crew and passengers. In such a case separate male and, except, where there are no female members of crew, female wards and sanitary accommodation should be provided for the exclusive use of the crew.
- 19.14 The floor covering in every permanent hospital should, so far as practicable, be free from joints.

## **20. Exemptions**

- 20.1 Regulation 31 of the Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour Convention) (Minimum Requirements for Seafarers etc.) Regulations 2014 states that vessels of less than 200 Gross Tonnes (as determined under the Merchant Shipping (Tonnage) Regulations 1997) may be exempt by the Secretary of State (this is normally via the Maritime and Coastguard Agency) of all or some of the requirements of the crew accommodation provisions provided in the exemption:
- 20.1.1 is reasonable taking account of the size of the ship and the number of persons on board
- 20.1.2 does not result in overall facilities less favourable than which would result if no exemption had been given; and
- 20.1.3 relates to Standard A3.1.7(b), 11(d), and 13 of the Maritime Labour Convention or as respects floor area only, Standard A3.1.9 (f) and (h) and to (l) of the Maritime Labour Convention, or
- 20.1.4 the exemption is otherwise expressly permitted in Standard A3.1 of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006.
- 20.2 It goes on to say that such an exemption:
- 20.2.1 is valid only if given in writing;
- 20.2.2 may be given subject to such conditions and limitations as the Secretary of State may specify; and
- 20.2.3 may be altered or cancelled by the Secretary of State, giving written notice to the shipowner.
- 20.3 The process to be followed to obtain such an exemption is the same as the process laid down in MGN 472 (M) Guidance Procedure of applying for a Substantial Equivalence.



## More Information

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In this Annex “general measurement” points mean in relation to any space, those points which, measured at a height of 850 millimetres above the floor, fall on an imaginary line drawn vertically through the following points:

- (a) every point mid-way between every 2 adjacent lamps in that space;
- (b) every point mid-way between any lamp and any position on the boundary of that space to which that lamp is nearer than any other lamp; and
- (c) where any part of the space available for free movement is shielded from the direct rays of lamp by a re-entrant angle formed in the boundary of that space, the central point of the space so shielded.

	<b>Value</b>
<b>Sleeping Rooms and Day Rooms</b>	
1. At general measurement points	50 lux
2. At every mirror	200 lux
3. At every seat at a writing desk or table	150 lux
4. At not less than half the seats (other than those mentioned in 3 above in a sleeping room provided for use of more than one person	150 lux
<b>Mess Rooms</b>	
5. At measurement points	100 lux
6. At every table and sink	150 lux
<b>Recreation Rooms (including rooms for watching films and television, hobbies and games rooms</b>	
7. At measurement points	50 lux
8. At every recreational table	100 lux
9. At every seat at a writing table or desk	150 lux
10. At not less than half the seats other than those mentioned in 3 above	150 lux
<b>Hospital Wards</b>	
11. At general measurement points	50 lux
12. At any washbasin	100 lux
13. At least one fixed lamp shall be installed in addition to the electric reading lamp required by regulation 13(4) to be provided at the head of each bed	
<b>Offices and Studies</b>	
14. At general measurement points	100 lux
15. At every seat at a writing desk or table	200 lux
<b>Sanitary Accommodation (including sanitary accommodation in hospitals)</b>	
16. At general measurement points	100 lux
17. At any mirror	200 lux
<b>Laundries</b>	
18. At general measurement points	100 lux
<b>Drying Rooms</b>	
19. At the centre of the space	50 lux
<b>Galleys (including bakeries and pantries)</b>	
20. At working positions	300 lux



21. The lights shall be so disposed as to ensure that food preparation tables, range tops, serving tables and washing up sinks receive the maximum amount of light	
<b>Dry provision store rooms and cold store rooms</b>	
22. At general measurement points	100 lux
23. The lights shall be so disposed as to ensure that shelves and cupboards receive the maximum amount of light	
<b>Passageways, companionways and covered deck recreation spaces</b>	
24. At general measurement points	50 lux
25. A light shall be placed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. at the head of each stairway, ladder and hatchway and</li> <li>2. at or near the doors of lockers provided for oilskins or working clothes</li> </ul>	

