

**Circular 298/ 2024**

**To:** Owners, ISM Managers, Controlling Principals, Recognised Organisations

**Date:** 5th October 2024

**Subject:** Automatic Identification Systems (AIS)

**This circular supersedes 216 / 2019 and 233 / 2020**

**Summary**

This circular clarifies requirements for Automatic Identification Systems (AIS) onboard Cook Islands flagged vessels.

**Application:**

SOLAS V/19 requires the carriage of approved AIS equipment for:

1. All vessels (including yachts and fishing vessels) of 300 gross tons (GT) and upwards engaged on international voyages;
2. Cargo vessels of 500 GT and upwards not engaged on international voyages; and
3. All passenger ships of any size whatsoever.

**SOLAS Requirements:**

**1. Continuous Transmission**

1. In accordance with SOLAS V/19.2.4, all ships fitted with an AIS must maintain it in operation at all times, except where international agreements, rules, or standards provide for the protection of navigational information.
2. Safety and Security Risk
3. In accordance with SOLAS Regulation XI-2/8, the Master has significant discretion concerning the safety and security of their ship where continued operation of the AIS would pose a higher risk. Therefore:
2. Where safety is deemed to be compromised by AIS' continued operation, Masters may switch the device off in accordance with SOLAS XI-2/8.
3. If an AIS is switched off, this action must be properly recorded in the official log and reported to the Company Security Officer and others in accordance with ship security plan provisions.
4. Maritime Cook Islands [monitoring@maritimecookislands.com](mailto:monitoring@maritimecookislands.com) should be informed at the soonest opportunity. Notification should include
  1. the reason;
  2. the intended route;
  3. ports of call for loading or discharge of cargo; and
  4. the expected duration.

**1. Annual Testing**

2. In accordance with SOLAS V/18.9, an AIS must be tested annually. The test must:
  1. be conducted by a service provider that is approved by a Cook Islands authorized Recognized Organization; and
  2. verify correct
    1. programming of the ship static information;

2. correct data exchange with connected sensors; and
3. radio performance by radio frequency measurement and on-air test using, for example, a Vessel Traffic Service.
3. A copy of the test report must be retained on board the ship.
4. Failure to comply with SOLAS
5. Failure to comply with SOLAS and the requirements set out in this circular may
6. Result in the owner, charterer and master of a vessel being fined for each infringement deficiency not exceeding NZD\$30,000.00.
7. Result in deregistration of the vessel and in some cases the fleet of the ISM manager / owner.

### Further Reading

1. SOLAS, International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, Consolidated Edition 2020
2. IMO Resolution A.224(7), Performance standards for echo-sounding equipment, adopted on 12 October 1971; as amended by IMO Resolution MSC.74(69), Adoption of new and amended performance standards, Annex 3, Recommendation on performance standards for a universal shipborne Automatic Identification System (AIS), adopted 12 May 1998; as revised by IMO Resolution MSC.115(73), Adoption of the revised performance standards for shipborne combined GPS/GLONASS receiver equipment, adopted 1 December 2000
3. IMO Resolution A.1106(29), Revised guidelines for the onboard operational use of shipborne Automatic Identification Systems (AIS), adopted 2 December 2015
4. IMO Circular SN.1/Circ.227, Guidelines for the installation of a shipborne Automatic Identification System (AIS), issued 6 January 2003, as amended by IMO Circular SN/Circ.245, issued 15 December 2004 and as corrected by IMO Circular SN.1/Circ.227/Corr.1, issued 10 December 2008
5. IMO Circular MSC.1/Circ.1252, Guidelines on the annual testing of the Automatic Identification System (AIS), issued 22 October 2007
6. IMO Circular MSC.1/Circ.1576, Unified interpretation of the provisions of SOLAS relating to the annual testing of the VDR, S-VDR, AIS and EPIRB, issued 16 June 2017
7. IACS UR Z17, Procedural requirements for service suppliers

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