

**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**

1.1 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**

2.1 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:

- 2.1.1 Where safety is deemed to be compromised by AIS' continued operation, Masters may switch the device off in accordance with SOLAS XI-2/8.
- 2.1.2 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.
- 2.1.3 Maritime Cook Islands [monitoring@maritimecookislands.com](mailto:monitoring@maritimecookislands.com) should be informed at the soonest opportunity. Notification should include
  - a. the reason;
  - b. the intended route;
  - c. ports of call for loading or discharge of cargo; and
  - d. the expected duration.

### **3. Annual Testing**

- 3.1 In accordance with SOLAS V/18.9, an AIS must be tested annually<sup>1</sup>. The test must:
- 3.1.1 be conducted by a service provider that is approved by a Cook Islands authorized Recognized Organization; and
  - 3.1.2 verify correct
    - a. programming of the ship static information;
    - b. correct data exchange with connected sensors; and
    - c. radio performance by radio frequency measurement and on-air test using, for example, a Vessel Traffic Service.
- 3.2 A copy of the test report must be retained on board the ship.

### **4. Failure to comply with SOLAS**

- 4.1 Failure to comply with SOLAS and the requirements set out in this circular may
- 4.1.1 Result in the owner, charterer and master of a vessel being fined for each infringement deficiency not exceeding NZD\$30,000.00<sup>2</sup>.
  - 4.1.2 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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<sup>1</sup> See IMO Circulars MSC.1/Circ.1252 and MSC.1/Circ.1576

<sup>2</sup> In accordance with 5 (2) of the Cook Islands Shipping (Infringement Deficiency) Regulation 2014