

MARITIME AND COASTGUARD AGENCY CODES OF PRACTICE NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2002

UPDATE ON THE REQUIREMENTS

There are currently five Maritime and Coastguard Agency Codes of Practice, which can be applied to United Kingdom vessels in commercial use.

YELLOW - *The Code of Practice for the Safety of Small Commercial Motor Vessels*

BLUE - *The Code of Practice for the Safety of Small Commercial Sailing Vessels*

BROWN - *The Code of Practice for the Safety of Small Workboats and Pilot Boats*

RED - *The Code of Practice for the Safety of Small Vessels in Commercial Use for Sport of Pleasure operating from a Nominated Departure Point (NDP)*

WHITE - *The Code of Practice for the Safety of Large Commercial Sailing and Motor Vessels*

SMALL VESSELS - *Vessels up to 24 metres load line length*
LARGE VESSELS - *Vessels 24 metres load line length and over*

The Codes contain safety requirements for the vessels and the crew of commercially operated vessels, (small and large) and are considered by MCA to be an acceptable alternative to the Merchant Shipping Regulations which otherwise would apply.

Harmonisation of the Codes to form:

“The Code of Practice for the Safety of Small Commercial Vessels”

We do not intend simply to merge all the Codes concerned with small vessels into one, but to rationalise and update the requirements where appropriate. Our brief is to consider the experience gained since the Codes were originally produced and to reflect developments in small craft safety standards. It is not intended however, to produce major changes to the philosophy or content of the Codes.


Representatives from all areas of the marine industry, (including designers, builders, regulators and operators) are participating in the Harmonisation Working Group. This will ensure that the Code remains an industry-wide agreed standard.

For greater convenience and to facilitate public access, the new Code, when introduced, will be available as a Merchant Shipping Notice on our website. www.mcga.gov.uk


Current Codes of Practice

The current Codes, which will remain in force until the Harmonised Code takes over, contain safety requirements for the vessels and the crew of small commercially operated vessels. They are considered by the MCA to be an acceptable alternative to the Merchant Shipping Regulations which otherwise would apply.


The current Codes are as below:

 - The **Yellow** Code of Practice for the Safety of Small Commercial Motor Vessels

The Yellow Code applies to motor vessels in commercial use in support of sport or pleasure that are less than 24 meters load line length and do not carry more than 12 passengers.

 - The **Blue** Code of Practice for the Safety of Small Commercial Sailing Vessels

The Blue Code applies to sailing vessels in commercial use in support of sport or pleasure that are less than 24 metres in load line length and do not carry more than 12 passengers.

 - The **Brown** Code of Practice for the Safety of Small Workboats and Pilot Boats

The Brown Code applies to small commercial vessels (other than for sport of pleasure) that carry cargo and/or not more than 12 passengers or provide a service in which neither cargo nor passengers are carried, or are United Kingdom pilot boats.

 - The **Red** Code of Practice for the Safety of Small Vessels in Commercial Use for Sport or Pleasure Operating from a Nominated Departure Point (NDP)

The Red Code of Practice or NDP Code applies to small commercial vessels in use for sport or pleasure that do not carry cargo or more than 12 passengers. The NDP Code also states that such a vessel may only operate in favourable weather and daylight, from a nominated departure point and not more than 20 miles from that NDP.

To date the following Authorities have been granted Certifying Authority status for Category 6 operation (up to 3 miles from a NDP).

Approved Local Authorities

- Scarborough
- East Devon
- Padstow
- Carrick
- Caradon

Authorities from whom Applications pending

- Bridgend County Council
- Kingston Upon Hull
- Larne
- Argyll and Bute
- Adur

- Pembrokeshire
- Torridge District Council
- Bristol City Council
- Barrow Borough Council

NDP Stickers

Red NDP Code Stickers have been issued to all Certifying Authorities including appropriate Local Authorities and Harbour Commissioners. These stickers will be further developed for the new Code of Practice for the Safety of Small Commercial Vessels.



- The **White** Code of Practice for the Safety of Large Commercial Sailing and Motor Vessels

The White Code, or Large Yacht Code, applies to vessels in commercial use for sport or pleasure, which are 24 metres in load line length and over. Or, if they are built before July 1968, are 150 gross tons and over, according to the tonnage measurement regulations at that date. As with other codes, vessels are also not permitted to carry cargo, or more than 12 passengers.

The Code sets required standards of safety and pollution prevention, which are appropriate to the size of the vessel. The standards are set by the relevant international conventions and equivalent standards are applied where it is not reasonable or practical to comply with international convention.

The Large Yacht Unit (ENSIGN)

The MCA Code is now established as the world-wide standard for Large Yachts. To support this the MCA has formed 'ENSIGN' - a dedicated business unit based in Newcastle, to provide a streamlined and customer focused service to the large yacht industry. Manning issues are retained by the Seafarers Standards Branch at MCA Head Quarters in Southampton.

ENSIGN was officially launched at the Fort Lauderdale Boat Show in October 2001. For further information please contact Frank Carter on +44 (0) 191 496 9920 or email Large_yachts@mcga.gov.uk.

The Role of Code Vessel Safety Branch

The main function of the Codes Branch at Headquarters in Southampton is to provide policy, interpretation and technical advice on the Codes of Practice for Commercial Vessels. This is achieved through internal liaison, and most importantly, through working with industry, the aim being to provide consistent and up-to-date advice on all survey aspects, and ensure that Code standards are upheld and developed.

The Branch will be chairing and providing support for the Construction and Equipment Working Group set up for the Large Yacht Review, and providing a first point of contact for any interested parties to give feedback on their experience of working with the Large Yacht Code.

The Review of the Large Yacht Code

As part of the MCA Business Plan for 2002 - 2003, the Large Yacht Code of Practice will be reviewed. Following the Code's 5 years in operation the review will reflect both the experience in implementing it and take account of changes in modern design and construction.

During the Monaco Yacht Show 2002 the MCA, in conjunction with the Yacht Report, are hosting a half day seminar on the morning of 25th September, at the Hotel Columbus, Monaco. This involves representatives from all sectors of the large yacht industry, including builders, designers, surveyors and operators from around the world. It is vital that the revised Code meets the needs of the industry and provides a current standard that is acceptable to all sides.

The appropriate Working Groups (Manning and Construction & Equipment) will consider all input to the Review, prior to the Draft Revised Code being submitted to the Steering Committee.

Enforcement

The MCA is increasing the inspection of vessels and enforcement of all the Codes of Practice. To this end, a number of Inspectors of Small Vessels check coded and un-coded vessels around the United Kingdom. Their presence helps to educate boat owners and ensure that unscrupulous operators are identified.

The activities of these inspectors and the MCA's Enforcement Unit means that Code evaders are identified and their activities investigated. This results in disruption of their illegal trading, the banning of trading by prohibition notices and in the most serious cases prosecution of the offenders. Courts hand down strict penalties for unlicensed operations. Documentation of prosecutions can be found on our [website www.mcga.gov.uk/news/prosecutions](http://www.mcga.gov.uk/news/prosecutions).

Internet List of Coded Boats

A list of coded vessels is now available on our website. The database contains details of vessels that owners have supplied and requested be displayed. Available information includes particulars of the vessel and the owner, along with contact details. It is hoped that more Coded boats will be added in due course. Further information is available at the following web address www.mcga.gov.uk/survey/code.htm

Manning Requirements

Vessels certified under a Code of Practice will be assigned an area category for their operation. For each category, there are required qualifications for the skipper and in some instances the crew. Should lower qualifications be held, then the vessel would be restricted to work within a lesser area category.

It is the responsibility of the owner/skipper to ensure that the relevant requirements are met and category limits adhered to.

Requirements for Vessels to be Examined and Certificated

The owner/managing agent of a vessel to be operated under the Code, should:

1. Choose an authorised Certifying Authority and contact them to obtain a copy of the appropriate application form for examination/survey. A list of MCA approved Certifying Authorities can be found at the end of this newsletter.
2. Complete the form and return it to the Certifying Authority with an advance of fees (when requested);
3. Arrange with the Certifying Authority for the vessel to be examined by an authorised person and documented in the appropriate report form for a Compliance Examination.
4. Be in receipt of a valid certificate for the vessel prior to it entering into service

Obtaining a Copy of the Codes of Practice

Copies of the Codes may be purchased from The Stationery Office. Orders should be addressed to The Publications Centre, PO Box 276, London, SW8 5DT, telephone number 0870 600 5522, quoting the appropriate ISBN number. Customers in Scotland may alternatively order by contacting Scottish Publications Sales on telephone number 0131 228 4181.

The ISBN Numbers are:

Yellow Code - 0 - 11 - 551185 - 7
Blue Code - 0 - 11 - 551184 - 9
Brown Code - 0 - 11 - 552006 - 6
Red Code - 0 - 11 - 551812 - 6
White Code - 0 - 11 - 551911 - 4

Pleasure Vessels

Non-regulated Pleasure Vessels (NRPV) are craft of less than 13.7m that operate non-commercially. Such vessels are not covered by any statutory requirements so far as life saving or fire fighting equipment are concerned.

To improve the Government's policy of safety at sea, numerous campaigns have been sponsored by the MCA and the Sea Safety Liaison Group, which include the:

RNLI (Royal National Lifeboat Institution) BMF (British Marine Federation)
RSS (Registry of Shipping and Seamen) RYA (Royal Yachting Association)
RLSS (Royal Life Saving Society)

In conjunction with the above organisations, an NRPV Code of Safe Practice has been developed. This is a series of pocket sized waterproof cards giving general safety advice and guidance on all aspects of sea safety.

Pleasure vessels 13.7 metres in length and over are obliged to comply with Merchant Shipping Regulations for life saving appliances and fire protection, as Class XII vessels. With respect to navigation, collision avoidance, and pollution, any vessel, irrespective of size, is required to comply with the relevant Merchant Shipping Regulations.

To obtain a copy of the NRPV Code please contact Mail Marketing (Scotland) on fax: 0115 901 3334

Rescue Boat Code (RBC)

A Rescue Boat Code is being developed under the co-ordination of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution with input from the Sea Safety Liaison Group and Surf Life Saving Association GB. The draft has now been disseminated to a large amount of interested parties for consultation and final acceptance.

Further information may be obtained from:

Code Vessel Safety Branch
Maritime and Coastguard Agency
Bay 1/20
Spring Place
105 Commercial Rd
Southampton
SO15 1EG

Tel: 02380 329 131

Fax: 02380 329 161

Email: codes@mcga.gov.uk

CODES OF PRACTICE FOR SMALL COMMERCIAL MOTOR AND SAILING VESSELS: LIST OF CERTIFYING AUTHORITIES

American Bureau of Shipping
ABS House
1 Frying Pan Alley
LONDON
E1 7HR
Tel: 020 7247 3255
Fax: 020 7247 4084
Contact: Mr R Curry

Bureau Veritas
2nd Floor
Tower Bridge Court
224 - 226 Tower Bridge Road
London SE1 2TX
Tel: 020 7403 6266
Fax: 020 7403 1590
Contact: Mr F Hardy / T Brooks

Det Norske Veritas
1st Floor
14 Mitchell Point
Ensign Way
Ensign Business Park
Hamble, Southampton
Tel: 023 8074 5947
Fax: 023 8074 5941
Contact: Mr R Walker

Germanischer Lloyd
UK Branch
Elm Court
53 Elmcroft Road
Orpington
Kent BR6 0HZ
Tel: 01689 891911
Fax: 01689 891876
Contact: Mr H Seibicke

Lloyd's Register of Shipping

The Society of Consulting Marine

Medina Chambers
Town Quay
Southampton
SO14 2AQ
Tel: 023 8052 5700
Fax: 023 8052 5799
Contact: Mr Keith Vernon

Royal Yachting Association
RYA House
Romsey Road
Eastleigh
SO5 4YA
Tel: 023 8062 7400
Fax: 023 8062 9924
Contact: Mr K Kershaw
Burness Corlett and Partners Ltd
Beresford House
Town Quay
SOUTHAMPTON
SO14 2AQ
Tel: 023 8033 9449
Fax: 023 8033 9440/80339565
Contact: Mr John Barker
Registro Italiano Navale (Rina)
14 Waterloo Place
LONDON
SW1Y 4AR
Tel: 020 7839 6099
Fax: 020 7930 2950
Contact: Mr G Poerio

Department for Transport, Local Government and
the Regions
Maritime and Coastguard Agency
Spring Place
105 Commercial Road
SOUTHAMPTON
SO15 1EG
Tel: 02380 329112
Fax: 02380 329161
Contact: Mary Cunningham

Engineers and Ship Surveyors
The Marine Society
202 Lambeth Road
LONDON SE1 7JW
Tel: 020 7261 0869
Fax: 020 7261 0871
Contact: Mr P Owen (Secretary)

Yacht Designers and Surveyors Association
Wheel House
Petersfield Road
Whitehill, Bordon
Hants GU35 9BU
Tel: 01420 473862
Fax: 01420 488328
Contact: Mrs D McNaughton
MECAL Ltd
Queen Annes Battery Marina
Plymouth
PL4 0LP
Tel: 01752 227989
Fax: 01752 227990
Contact: Mr Anthony Head

International Institute of Marine Surveyors
Administration Office
Stone Lane
Gosport
Hampshire
PO12 155
Tel: 023 9258 8000
Fax: 023 9258 8002
Contact: Capt Ian Wilkins