DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT

No. R. **March 2026**

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1951 (ACT NO. 57 OF 1951)

THE MERCHANT SHIPPING (RADIO INSTALLATIONS) REGULATIONS, 2025

I, Barbara Creecy, Minister of Transport hereby, in terms of section 356(1) of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1951 (Act No. 57 of 1951), intend to repeal the Merchant Shipping (Radio Installations) Regulations, 2002 promulgated by Government Notice No. R. 502 of 26 April 2002, as amended by Government Notices No. R. 457 of 02 July 2013 and, make the Regulations set out in the Schedule hereunder.

Ms. B. Creecy, MP
Minister of Transport

Date:

SCHEDULE

Arrangement of regulations

Regulation No.

PART 1
GENERAL

Title and commencement

1. These regulations are called the Draft Merchant Shipping (Radio Installations) Regulations, 2025 and are published for public comments.

Terms and definitions

2. (1) In these Regulations, unless the context otherwise indicates, any word or expression used in these Regulations, to which a meaning has been assigned in the Act, bears the meaning so assigned, and—

‘AIS-SART’ means an automatic identification system search and rescue transmitter capable of operating on frequencies dedicated for AIS (161.975 MHz (AIS1) and 162.025 MHz (AIS2);

‘bridge-to-bridge communications’ means safety radiocommunications between ships from the position from which such ships are normally navigated;

‘cargo ship’ means any ship that is not—

(a) a passenger ship;
(b) a fishing vessel; or
(c) a pleasure vessel;

‘conning position’ means the place on the bridge with a commanding view of the ship and its position used by navigators when commanding, manoeuvring and controlling the ship;

‘continuous radio watch’ means that the radio and listening watch concerned shall not be interrupted other than for brief intervals when the ship's receiving capability is impaired or blocked by its own communications or when the facilities are under periodical maintenance or checks;

‘contravene’ in relation to a provision of these Regulations, includes failing or refusing to comply with that provision;

‘Convention State’ means any State, other than the Republic, that is a State party to the Safety Convention;

‘Department’ means the Department of Transport for the Republic of South Africa;

‘Digital selective calling (DSC)’ means a technique using digital codes which enables a radio station to establish contact with, and transfer information to, another station or group of stations, and complying with the relevant recommendations of the International Telecommunication Union Radiocommunication Sector (ITU-R) and as communicated by the Authority from time to time;

‘DSC watch’ means listening for an audible alarm from a ship's DSC equipment on VHF (channel 70), MF (2187.5 kHz) or HF (8414.5

kHz), and on at least one of the distress and safety DSC frequencies 4207.5 kHz, 6312 kHz, 12577 kHz or 16804.5 kHz;

'Emergency position-indicating radio beacon (EPIRB)' means a transmitter operating in the frequency band 406.0-406.1 MHz capable of transmitting a distress alert via satellite to a rescue coordination centre and transmitting signals for on-scene locating;

'existing ship' means a ship that is not a new ship;

'fishing vessel' means any of the following classes of vessels used for catching fish or other living resources of the sea for financial gain or reward:
Class A—fishing vessels of 45 metres or more in length making voyages outside waters under South African jurisdiction;

Class B—fishing vessels of less than 45 metres in length making voyages outside waters under South African jurisdiction;

Class C—fishing vessels, other than of class D, making voyages exclusively within waters under South African jurisdiction;

Class D—fishing vessels making voyages exclusively within waters under South African jurisdiction, not more than 40 nautical miles from shore;

'from shore' means seaward from the 'low-water line' as defined in section 1 of the Maritime Zones Act, 1994 (Act No. 15 of 1994);

'general radiocommunications' means communications other than distress, urgency and safety communications;

'Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS)' means a system that performs the functions as set out in regulations 7 and 22;

'GMDSS (Convention) certificates' includes-

(a) GMDSS First-class Radio Electronic Certificate;
(b) GMDSS Second-class Radio Electronic Certificate;
(c) GMDSS General Operator's Certificate,

which are respectively issued in accordance with the STCW Convention and ITU Radio Regulations;

'GMDSS (non-SOLAS Convention) certificates' includes -

(a) Long Range Certificate;
(b) Short Range Certificate,

which are respectively issued in accordance with the ITU Regulations;

'GMDSS identities' means information which may be transmitted to uniquely identify the ship or its associated rescue boats and survival craft, and the identities include the ship's call sign, Maritime Mobile Service Identity (MMSI), EPIRB hexadecimal identity, recognised mobile satellite service identities and equipment serial numbers;

'gross tonnage' means the measure of the overall size of a ship determined in accordance with the provisions of the International Convention on Tonnage Measurement of Ships;

'High Frequency (HF)' means the frequency spectrum between 3 000 kHz and 30 MHz;

'IMO' means the International Maritime Organization;

'ITU-R' means the International Telecommunication Union Radiocommunication Sector;

'length' means—

(a) in the case of a registered ship, the length means overall length as defined in the Ship Registration Regulations, 2002;

'locating' means the finding of ships, aircraft, survival craft or persons in distress;

'maintenance' means any activity intended to keep a radio installation in efficient working condition, and includes tests, measurements, replacements, adjustments and repairs;

'maritime safety information (MSI)' means navigational and meteorological warnings, meteorological forecasts and other urgent safety-related messages broadcast to ships;

'Medium Frequency (MF)' means the frequency spectrum between 300 kHz and 3000 kHz;

‘MF coast station’ means a radio communication service located on the coast offering services in the medium frequency band (300–3000 kHz);

‘mobile satellite service’ means a radio communication service between—

(a) mobile earth stations and one or more space stations, or between space stations used by this service; or

(b) mobile earth stations by means of one or more space stations, and this service may include feeder links necessary for its operation;

‘navigational receiver’ means a receiver for-

(a) a global navigation satellite system;

(b) a terrestrial radionavigation system, or

(c) other approved means,

suitable for use at all times throughout the intended voyage to establish and update the ship’s position by automatic means, as communicated by the Authority from time to time;

‘new ship’ means—

(a) a ship constructed or undergoing alteration after the commencement of these Regulations; or

(b) any ship that is registered or licensed anew in the Republic after the commencement of these Regulations;

‘non-SOLAS ship’ means—

(a) a passenger ship that is not foreign-going;

(b) a cargo ship of 300 gross tonnage or more that is non-foreign-going;

(c) a cargo ship of less than 300 gross tonnage;

(d) a Class B, Class C and Class D fishing vessels; or

(e) a pleasure vessel of 100 gross tonnage or more;

‘operating position’ means the position where radio equipment is installed on the vessel;

‘pleasure vessel’ means a ship that is used solely for sport or recreation;

‘radar search and rescue transponder (SART)’ means a search and rescue transponder operating on radar frequencies in the frequency band 9.2-9.5 GHz;

‘radio communication’ means telecommunication by means of radio waves;

‘radio communication service’ means a service as defined in the ITU Radio Regulations involving the transmission, emission or reception of radio waves for specific telecommunication purposes;

‘Radio Regulations’ means the Radio Regulations complementing the Constitution and Convention of the International Telecommunication Union which is in force at any given time;

‘radio installation’ means any radio installation provided on board a ship in compliance with these Regulations, including its associated antennas, inter-connecting circuits and, where appropriate, sources of energy;

‘radio operator’ means a person holding a valid appropriate certificate issued in accordance with the ITU Radio Regulations;

‘recognized mobile satellite service’ means any service which operates through a satellite system and is recognised by the Authority, for use in GMDSS;

‘SAR Convention’ means the International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue, the maritime safety convention of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) that provides a framework for coordinating search and rescue operations at sea, adopted in 1979 and entered into force in 1985;

‘satellite service on 406 MHz’ means a service operating through a satellite system having global availability designed to detect EPIRBs transmitting in the frequency band 406.0-406.1 MHz;

‘sea area A1’ means an area within the radiotelephone coverage of at least one VHF coast station in which continuous DSC alerting is available as may be declared by the Department;

‘sea area A2’ means an area, excluding sea area A1, within the radiotelephone coverage of at least one MF coast station in which continuous DSC alerting is available as may be declared by the Department;

‘sea area A3’ means an area, excluding sea areas A1 and A2, within the coverage of recognized mobile satellite service supported by the ship earth station carried on board in which continuous alerting is available;

‘sea area A4’ means an area outside sea areas A1, A2 and A3;

‘service’, in relation to a reference to any particular type of radio communication service, means a reference to that service as defined in the ITU Radio Regulations;

‘ship station’ means a mobile station, in the maritime mobile service located on board a ship that is not permanently moored, other than a survival craft station;

‘SOLAS ship’ means—

(a) a foreign-going passenger ship;

(b) a foreign-going cargo ship of 300 gross tonnage or more; or

(c) a Class A fishing vessel;

‘STCW Convention’ means the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers done at London on 7 July 1978, as modified by any amendment made under Article XII of that Convention that has entered into force for the Republic;

‘survival craft’ means a vessel that is capable of sustaining the lives of persons in distress after abandoning ship;

‘survival craft station’ means a mobile station in the maritime mobile service intended solely for survival purposes and located on any lifeboat, life-raft or other survival equipment;

'the Act' means the Merchant Shipping Act, 1951 (Act No. 57 of 1951);

'Very High Frequency (VHF)' means the frequency spectrum between 30 MHz and 300 MHz;

'VHF coast station' means a radio communication service located on the coast offering services in the very high frequency band (30–300 MHz);

'VHF radio installation' means the equipment operating in the frequency band 156.025–162.025 MHz; and

'waters under South African jurisdiction' means comprising: -

(a) the internal and territorial waters of the Republic; and

(b) the exclusive economic zone of the Republic.

(2) For the purposes of these Regulations, a ship is to be taken to be making a voyage or to be at sea at any time when the ship is not securely ashore, moored in a safe berth.

(3) All other terms and abbreviations which are used in these Regulations, and which are defined in the Radio Regulations and in the South African Maritime and Aeronautical Search and Rescue Act, 2002 (Act No. 44 of 2002) International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue, 1979, as may be amended, shall have the meanings as defined in those Regulations and the SAR Convention.

Application

3.(1) Subject to subregulation (2), these Regulations apply to a vessel of 25 gross tonnage or more, and so apply to—

(a) a ship that is registered or licensed in the Republic wherever the vessel may be; and

(b) any other ship, while in the Republic or its territorial waters,

and specifically—

(i) Regulations 5, 6 and Part 2 apply to SOLAS ships and Class A fishing vessels;

(ii) Regulations 5, 6 and Part 3 apply to non-SOLAS ships, and to Class B, Class C and Class D fishing vessels; and

(iii) Parts 4 applies both to SOLAS and to non-SOLAS ships.

(2) These Regulations do not apply to —

(a) pleasure vessel of less than 100 gross tonnage;
(b) a vessel of less than 25 gross tonnage; and
(c) every commercial vessel (regardless of size) operating on sheltered waters as defined in the Merchant Shipping (National Small Vessel Safety Regulations 2007),

(3) A provision of these Regulations does not apply to a vessel registered on the South African Ships Register in the waters of a country other than the Republic where the provision is inconsistent with a law of that country which, by its terms, applies to the vessel when in the waters of that country.

(4) The vessels in subregulation (1) are required to comply with these Regulations as follows:

(a) a SOLAS ship, upon promulgation of these Regulations;
(b) a new ship, upon promulgation of these Regulations; and
(c) an existing non-SOLAS ship, two years after promulgation of these Regulations;

(5) A ship may carry radio equipment, in addition to that required by these Regulations, provided the additional radio equipment-

(a) do not present a safety hazard;
(b) are not detrimental to the seaworthiness of the ship;
(c) comply with the requirements of these Regulations; and
(d) where applicable, are type approved as required.

Exemptions and equivalents

4. (1) Where these Regulations require that a particular fitting, material, appliance, apparatus, item of equipment, or type thereof, must be fitted or carried in a ship, or that any particular provision must be made, or any procedure or arrangement must be complied with, the Authority may allow any other fitting, material, appliance, apparatus, item of equipment, or type thereof, to be fitted or carried, or any other provision, procedure or arrangement to be made in that ship if it is satisfied by trial thereof or otherwise that such other fitting, material, appliance, apparatus, item of equipment, or type thereof, or that any particular provision, procedure or arrangement is at least as effective as that required by these Regulations.

(2) For the purposes of these Regulations, the results of a verification or test are to be accepted if the verification or test was carried out—

(a) in accordance with these Regulations or with a standard, code of practice, specification or technical description of a Convention State offering equivalent levels of safety, suitability and fitness for the purpose; and

(b) by a person in a Convention State offering suitable and satisfactory guarantees of technical and professional competence and independence.

(3) The Authority may exempt any individual ship or class of ships from any of the provisions of Part 2 or 3, on such terms, if any, as the Authority may specify, and may, after notice, alter or cancel any such exemption.

Ships and persons in distress

5. Nothing in these Regulations is to be taken to prevent any ship, survival craft or persons in distress from using any means at the ship, survival craft or person's disposal to attract attention, make known their position or obtain help.

Performance standards

6. (1) Subject to subregulation (2), radio equipment required by these Regulations shall—

(a) in the case of SOLAS ships, comply with performance standards not inferior to the relevant performance standards adopted by the IMO and communicated by the Authority from time to time; and

(b) in the case of non-SOLAS ships, comply with such performance standards issued by the Authority from time to time; and

(c) in either case, be of a type approved by the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa.

(2) In respect of a ship entitled to fly the flag of a Convention State, subregulation (6)(1)(c) does not apply to equipment of a type approved by or on behalf of the competent maritime authority of that State.

(3) Every approval given pursuant to this regulation—

(a) must be given in writing;

(b) must specify the date on which it takes effect and the conditions if any, on which the approval is given; and

(c) may, after reasonable notice, be altered or cancelled.

PART 2

SOLAS REQUIREMENTS

Functional Requirements

7. Every ship to which this Part applies, while at sea, must be capable of performing the GMDSS functions, in accordance with regulation 4 of Chapter IV of the Safety Convention.

Radio Installations

8. (1) Every ship shall be provided with radio installations capable of complying with the functional requirements prescribed by regulation 7 throughout the ship's intended voyage and, unless exempted under regulation 4, complying with the requirements of regulation 10 and, as appropriate for the sea area or areas through which the ship will pass during the ship's intended voyage, the requirements of either regulation 11, 12, 13 or 14.

(2) Every radio installation required by this Part shall be located, protected, clearly marked, in accordance with the requirements regulation 6-2 of Chapter IV of the Safety Convention.

(3) Control of the VHF radiotelephone channels required for navigational safety, shall–

(a) be immediately available on the navigation bridge convenient to the conning position; and

(b) where necessary, facilities must be available to permit radio communications from the wings of the navigational bridge: Provided portable VHF equipment may be used to comply with the requirements of this paragraph.

(4) Usage or installation of equipment and systems that cause harmful interference of, electromagnetic compatibility and harmful interaction with radio installations is prohibited on a ship to which this Part applies.

Installation of distress panel

9. (1) In passenger ships, a distress panel shall be installed at the conning position, which shall be in accordance with regulation 6-4 of Chapter IV of the Safety Convention.

(2) In passenger ships, if an EPIRB is used as the secondary means of distress alerting and is not remotely activated from the distress panel, it shall be acceptable to have an additional EPIRB installed in the wheelhouse near the conning position.

(3) In passenger ships, a distress alarm panel shall be installed at the conning position, which shall be in accordance with regulation

6-6 of Chapter IV of the Safety Convention and may be combined with the distress panel referred to in subregulation (1).

Radio equipment: General

10. Every ship to which this Part applies must be provided with radio equipment in accordance with regulation 7 of Chapter IV of the Safety Convention.

Radio equipment: Sea area A1

11. In addition to meeting the requirements of regulation 10, every ship engaged on voyages in sea area A1 must be provided with a radio installation capable of initiating the transmission of ship-to-shore distress alerts from the position from which the ship is normally navigated, in accordance with regulation 8 of Chapter IV of the Safety Convention.

Radio equipment: Sea area A2

12. In addition to meeting the requirements of regulation 10, every ship engaged in voyage within sea area A2 must be provided with radio installations, in accordance with regulation 9 of Chapter IV of the Safety Convention.

Radio equipment: Sea area A3

13. In addition to meeting the requirements of regulation 10, every ship engaged within sea area A3 must be provided with radio installations, in accordance with regulation 10 of Chapter IV of the Safety Convention:

Radio equipment: Sea area A4

14. In addition to meeting the requirements of regulation 10, every ship engaged on voyages within sea area A4 shall be provided with radio installations, in accordance with regulation 11 of Chapter IV of the Safety Convention.

Watches

15. Every ship, while at sea, shall maintain a continuous watch for distress, urgency and safety communication purposes in accordance with regulation 12 of Chapter IV of the Safety Convention.

Sources of energy

16. While the ship is at sea, a supply of electrical energy shall be available at all times sufficient to operate the radio installations and to charge any batteries used as part of a reserve source or sources of energy for the radio installations in accordance with regulation 13 of Chapter IV of the Safety Convention.

Maintenance requirements

17. The maintenance of equipment on a ship and shore-based maintenance shall be in accordance with regulation 15 of Chapter IV of the Safety Convention and as determined by the Authority.

Radio Personnel

18. Every ship shall carry personnel qualified for distress, urgency and safety communications purposes in accordance with regulation 16 of Chapter IV of the Safety Convention.

Radio Records

19. A record shall be kept on board of all incidents connected with the radiocommunication services which appear to be of importance to safety of life at sea in accordance with regulation 17 of Chapter IV of the Safety Convention and as determined by the Authority.

Position-updating

20. All two-way communication equipment carried on board a ship to which this Part applies which is capable of automatically including the ship's position in the distress alert shall be automatically provided with this information from an internal or external navigation receiver in accordance with regulation 18 of Chapter IV of the Safety Convention.

Exemption from requirements of this Part

21. The Authority may grant partial or conditional exemptions to individual ships from the requirements of regulations 10 to 14 inclusive, in accordance with regulation 3 of Chapter IV of the Safety Convention.

PART 3

NON-SOLAS REQUIREMENTS

Functional Requirements

22. Every ship to which this Part applies, while at sea, must be capable of—

(a) Transmitting and receiving general radio communications.

(i) transmitting ship-to-shore distress alert;
(ii) transmitting ship-to-ship distress alert;
(iii)transmitting and receiving on-scene communications including appropriate SAR coordinating communications;
(iv) receiving navigational and meteorological warnings and urgent information;
(v) transmitting and receiving communications relating to the navigation, movements needs of ships; and
(vi)transmitting and receiving urgency and safety radiocommunications; and
(vii) transmitting locating signals;

(b) assisting other ships in distress:

(i) receiving shore-to-ship distress alert relays;
(ii)receiving ship-to-ship distress alerting; and

(ii)receiving urgency and safety radiocommunications.

Radio installations

23.(1) Every ship shall be provided with radio installations capable of complying with the functional requirements prescribed by regulation 22 throughout the ship's intended voyage and, unless exempted under regulation 4, complying with the requirements of regulation 24 and, as appropriate for the sea area or areas through which the ship will pass during the ship's intended voyage, the requirements of regulation 25.

(2) Every radio installation required by this Part must be—

(a) so located that no harmful interference of mechanical, electrical or other origin affects its proper use, and that electromagnetic compatibility is ensured and harmful interaction avoided with other equipment and systems;

(b) so located as to ensure the greatest possible degree of safety and operational availability, with warning notice when appropriate;

(c) protected against harmful effects of water, extremes of temperature and other adverse environmental conditions;

(d) provided with reliable emergency light, independent of the system that supplies the normal lighting of the radio installation, must be provided and permanently arranged so as to be capable of providing adequate illumination of the operating controls of the radio installation and emergency card of instructions required by sub regulation (23)(3)(b) and (23)(4)(d).

(e) clearly marked with GMDSS identities, as applicable, for use by the radio installation operator.

(3) **VHF Radio Installation**

(a) Every VHF radio installation required by this Part must be located in the upper part of the ship. Control of the VHF channels required for navigational safety must be immediately available on the navigation bridge convenient to the conning position and, where necessary, facilities such as portable two-way VHF radio equipment must be available to permit radio communications from the wings of the navigation bridge.

(b) every radio installation required by this Part must have a card of instructions, at least in the English language, giving a clear summary for distress, urgency and safety communications that

must be displayed in full view of each VHF radio operating position.

(c) every ship to which this Part applies must be provided with an antenna suitable for the efficient radiation and reception of signals in the frequency band 156.025–162.025 MHz. The antenna must be vertically polarised and so far, as practicable, have an unobstructed view in all directions.

(4) **MF/HF Radio Installation**

(a) The MF/HF radio installation must be in the upper part of the ship and must be so sited that it is protected to the greatest possible extent from interference and noise that might impair the accurate reception of messages and signals;

(b) There must be an efficient means of two-way communication, independent of the ship's main communication system and main source of electrical power, between the MF/HF radio installation and any other place from which the ship is normally navigated;

(c) have a reliable clock, securely mounted in such a position that the entire dial can easily be observed from the MF/HF radio installation operating position;

(d) a card of instructions, at least in the English language, giving a clear summary of the MF/HF radio installations distress, urgency and safety procedures must be displayed in full view of each MF/HF radio operating position and

(e) every MF/HF radio installation must be provided with suitable antennas and insulators. Where wire antennas are suspended between supports liable to whipping, they must be protected against breakage. In addition, every such ship must carry—

(i) if the antenna is a supported wire antenna, a spare antenna completely assembled for rapid replacement of the radio installation antenna; or
(ii) if the antenna is not a supported wire antenna, a spare antenna of similar electrical characteristics, and

the necessary means to erect the antenna.

(f) The normal range and minimum rated output power of the transmitter required by the MF/HF Radio installation shall be as communicated by the Authority from time to time.

(5) Where a source of energy for the radio installation required by this Part consists of battery or batteries, means must be provided at the radio installation to indicate continuously whether the battery voltage is adequate to supply energy for the radio installation.

(6) **Interference with reception and other installations-**

(a) At no time while the ship is at sea, is the operation of a radio installation required by this Part to prevent in any way the efficient operation of any other equipment installed on board the ship.

(b) At no time while the ship is—

(i) at sea; or

(ii) in a port when a radio watch is required by the master, is the operation of any equipment in the ship to affect the efficient reception of radio signals by means of a radio installation required by this Part.

(c) Where in respect of any ship to which this Part applies it is impracticable to erect efficient and properly installed antennas for broadcast receivers that do not interfere with the efficiency of the ship's radio installation, the ship must be provided with a communal antenna system for broadcast receivers.

Radio equipment: General

24. (1) Every ship to which this Part applies, shall be provided with–

(a) A VHF radio installation capable of transmitting and receiving;

(i) DSC on the frequency 156.525 MHz (channel 70). It shall be possible to initiate the transmission of distress alerts on channel 70 from the position from which the ship is normally navigated;

(ii) Radiotelephony on the frequencies 156.300 MHz (channel 6), 156.650 MHz (channel 13) and 156.800 MHz (channel 16); and

(iii) A radio installation capable of maintaining a DSC watch on VHF channel 70;

(b) a radio installation capable of transmitting and receiving general radiocommunications operating on working frequencies in the band between 156 MHz and 174 MHz which may be separate from, or combined with that required by paragraph (a); and

(c) a emergency position-indicating radio beacon (EPIRB) operating in the frequency band 406.0-406.1 MHz which shall be-

(i) capable of transmitting a distress alert via satellite to a rescue coordination centre and transmitting signals for on-secene locating;

(ii) installed in an easily accessible position;

(iii) ready to be manually released and capable of being carried by one person into a survival craft;

(iv) capable of floating free if the ship sinks and of being automatically activated when afloat;

(v) capable of being activated manually; and

(vi) as communicated by the Authority from time to time

(2) Every ship to which this Part applies, shall be provided with:-

(a) Three portable two-way VHF radiotelephone apparatus must be provided on every SOLAS ship, other than a cargo ship of less than 500 gross tonnage.

(b) Two portable two-way VHF radiotelephone apparatus must be provided-

(i) on every SOLAS ship that is a cargo ship of 300 gross tonnage or more but less than 500 gross tonnage; and

(ii) on every non-SOLAS ship that is—
(aa) a passenger ship;
(bb) a cargo ship of 300 gross tonnage or more; or
(cc) a fishing vessel of 24 metres or more in length.

(c) One portable two-way VHF radiotelephone apparatus provided on every non-SOLAS ship that is—
(i) a cargo ship of less than 300 gross tonnage;
(ii) a fishing vessel of less than 24 metres in length; or
(iii) a pleasure vessel of 100 gross tonnage or more.

(d)the portable two-way VHF radiotelephone apparatus required by sub regulations (24)(2)(a), (24)(2)(b) and (24)(2)(c) must be made watertight through integral design and may also be used for on-board radio communication if it is capable of operating on appropriate frequencies.

(e)the battery included in the survival craft fixed radio installation must not be used for any purpose other than the operation of such equipment and the searchlight carried in the survival craft.

(f) the emergency battery should be sealed for use only in emergency situations and marked by the supplier with battery expiry date. The battery should be considered as exhausted, if its seal is broken and should be replaced immediately if the ship is in port or immediately on return to port, if the ship is at sea .

(g)if the portable two-way VHF radiotelephone apparatus with re-chargeable batteries (secondary batteries) is used for onboard communications, chargers for these batteries should be provided.

(3) Every ship to which this Part applies, shall be provided with a radar SART or AIS-SART;

(a)The radar SART required by this Part must be capable of operating in the 9 GHz band and must be stowed so as to enable rapid placement in a survival craft.

(b)The AIS-SART required by this Part must be capable of operating in the AIS band and must be stowed so as to enable rapid placement in a survival craft.

(c)A vessel that is equipped with free-fall lifeboats should have a Search and Rescue Radar Transponder permanently and securely mounted therein.

(d)The Radar SART or AIS-SART should have waterproof marking with operational instructions, battery expiry date and the ship's name and call sign.

Radio Equipment: Non-Solas Ships

25.(1) In addition to meeting the requirements of regulation 24, every ship, being—

(a) a passenger ship making a voyage g more than 40nm ;
(b) a cargo ship of 100 gross tonnage or more making a voyage more than 40 nautical miles from shore;
(c)a cargo ship of less than 100 gross tonnage making a voyage more than 40 nautical miles from shore;
(d) a class B or C fishing vessel; or
(e)a pleasure vessel of 100 gross tonnage or more,

shall be provided with—

(i) an MF/HF radio installation capable of transmitting and receiving, for distress and safety communication purposes, on all distress and safety frequencies in the bands 1605 kHz and 4000 kHz and between 4000 kHz and 27500 kHz using—

(a) DSC; and
(b) radiotelephony;

(ii) equipment capable of maintaining DSC watch on the frequencies 2 187.5 kHz, 8 414.5 kHz and at least one of the distress and safety frequencies 4 207.5 kHz, 6 312 kHz, 12 577 kHz or 16 804.5 kHz;

(iii) a receiver or receivers capable of receiving MSI and search and rescue related information throughout the entire voyage in which the ship is engaged;

Radio Watches

26. (1) Every ship to which this Part applies, fitted with a **VHF radio installation** shall, while at sea, must maintain-

(a) a continuous watch on the navigation bridge on VHF DSC channel 70 and on the frequency 156.8 MHz (VHF channel 16).

(b) This radio watch may be discontinued—

(i) when the receiver is being used for traffic on a frequency other than 156.8 MHz;

(ii) when the ship is maintaining a watch on a frequency other than 156.8 MHz for the purpose of a port operation, ship movement or safety of navigation service;

(iii) when, at the direction of the master, the watch is being maintained elsewhere in the ship; or

(iv) if, in the opinion of the master, the watch is prejudicial to the safety of the ship.

(c) where the radio watch is discontinued pursuant to sub regulation (1)(b)(iii) or (iv), entries must be made in the ship's official logbook or in the radio logbook required by regulation 30, as the case requires, of the times and duration for which the watch on the navigation bridge was discontinued and of the circumstances in which the watch was transferred elsewhere or in which the safety of the ship was prejudiced, as the case may be;

(d)a written summary must be maintained of all communications relating to distress, urgency and safety traffic received or transmitted on the VHF radio installation during the radio watch.

(e) a radio watch for broadcasts of maritime safety information on the appropriate channel or channels on which such information is broadcast for the area in which the ship is being navigated.

(2) Every ship to which this Part applies, fitted with a **MF/HF radio installation,** while at sea, must maintain-

(a) a DSC watch—

(

(ii) on the distress and safety DSC Frequencies 2187.5 kHz or 8414.5 kHz and on at least one of the distress and safety DSC frequencies 4207.5 kHz, 6312 kHz, 12577 kHz or 16804.5 kHz

() a radio watch for broadcasts of maritime safety information on the appropriate frequency or frequencies on which such information is broadcast for the area in which the ship is being navigated;

Sources of Energy

27.(1) Every ship to which this Part applies, which have the sitting and installation of batteries which provides any source of energy shall be as communicated by the Authority from time to time.

(3) **VHF Radio Installation**

(a) At all times while a ship fitted with a VHF radio installation is at sea and at all reasonable times when it is in port, there must be available a source of energy sufficient to operate the VHF radio installation at its nominal rated output power.

(b) Where batteries are provided as a source of energy for any part of the VHF radio installation, they must have the capacity required by sub regulation (27)(3)(a) and must be maintained at all times while at sea in such condition as to be able to supply continuously for at least six hours a total current equal to the sum of—

(i) the current consumption of the VHF receiver; and
(ii) one fifth of the current consumption of the VHF transmitter.

(c) A ship fitted with a VHF radio installation and being a fishing vessel of 24 metres or more in length or a passenger ship, means must be provided, where practicable, to operate the VHF radio installation from an alternative source of energy situated in the upper part of the ship, unless the source of energy referred to in sub regulation (27)(3)(a) is situated there. The alternative source of energy may be the reserve source of energy required by sub regulation (27)(4)(c), in which case the VHF usage thereof is to be limited to distress, urgency and safety communications

(d) Where provision is made for operating the VHF radio installation from alternative sources of energy, clearly indicated means must be provided for rapid changing from one source of energy to another.

(4) **MF/HF Radio Installation**

(a) A ship fitted with an MF/HF radio installation at all times while at sea and at all reasonable times when it is in port, there must be available a main source of energy sufficient to operate the radio installation over the normal range required by regulation (23)(4)(f).

(b) Where batteries are provided as a source of energy, they must have the capacity required by sub regulation (27)(4)(a) and must be maintained at all times while at sea in such condition as to be able to supply continuously for at least six hours a total current equal to the sum of—

(i) the current consumption of the radio receiver and of the transmitter when it is in a condition that operation of the "press to transmit" switch will make it ready for the immediate transmission of speech;

(ii) one third of the current that may be drawn by the radio transmitter for speech transmission on the frequency at which the current consumption of the transmitter is at a maximum;

(iii) the current consumption of all additional loads to which the battery may supply energy in time of distress or emergency; and

(iv) where the source of energy is also used by the VHF radio installation, the current consumption of the VHF radio receiver and one fifth of the current consumption of the VHF radio transmitter

(c) A ship fitted with an MF/HF radio installation and being a fishing vessels of 24 metres or more in length or passenger ships, a reserve source of energy must be provided in the upper part of the ship unless the main source of energy is situated there.

(5) The main source as per sub regulation(27)(3)(a) and (27)(4)(a), reserve source as per regulation (27)(4)(c) or alternative source of energy as per sub regulation 27(3)(c), if provided, must be used to supply only-

(a) the MF/HF radio installation as required by regulation 25(1)(i) and 25(1)(ii);

(b)the emergency light required by regulation 23(2)(d);

(c) the VHF radio installation as required by regulation 24(1)(a) and 24(1)(b);

(d) a number of low-power emergency circuits that are wholly confined to the upper part of the ship, if such circuits are adequately fused and capable of being readily disconnected from the reserve source of energy, and that source has sufficient capacity to carry the additional load;

(e)the MSI receiver required by regulation 25(1)(iii);

(f) the Navigational receiver required by regulation 31(1);

(g) the battery voltage indication required by regulation 23(5); and

(h) any additional equipment as communicated by the Authority from time to time.

(6) **Charging of batteries-**

(a) Where batteries are provided as a source of energy for any part of the radio installation required by this Part, means must be provided on board the ship for charging such batteries from the ship's main source of electrical power. The charging facilities must be adequate to ensure that the batteries can be fully charged within a period of 16 hours: Provided that where more than one battery is provided and each has sufficient capacity to comply with sub regulation (27)(6), the charging facilities must be adequate to ensure that each battery can be fully charged within a period of 16 hours, but not necessarily simultaneously.

(b) Where practicable, the batteries must be fully charged on every occasion immediately before the ship leaves port.

Maintenance Requirements

28.(1) Radio equipment required by this Part must be in an efficient working condition—

(a) whenever the ship goes to sea; and

(b) at all times when the ship is at sea, unless there is a defect in the equipment and maintenance is being carried out or such maintenance is not practicable.

(2) Where any additional equipment, which is not required by this Part, is provided, the equipment must be of such design that any malfunction of any part of that equipment will not be adversely affect the operation of the radio equipment required by this Part.

(3) Where appropriate the radio installation required by these regulations must be so constructed and installed that it is readily accessible for inspection and on-board maintenance purposes.

(4) Adequate tools, testing equipment and spare parts, but at least those communicated by the Authority from time to time, must be provided on board the ship to enable the equipment to be maintained. Spare parts must be appropriately labelled and must be stowed so as to be readily accessible.

(5) Adequate information, at least in the English language, shall be provided to enable the radio installation to be properly operated and maintained in user manuals onboard, and if stored in an electronic format, means must be provided to readily display the information.

(6) In respect of ships to which this Part applies, there must be available on board—

(a) a rigging plan of the fitted antennas showing—
(i) elevation and plan views of the antennas; and
(ii) the dimensions of transmitting antennas;

(b) complete information on the wiring of the radio installation showing all cable interconnections and terminations and any additional requirements as communicated by the Authority from time to time.

(7) In all ships to which this Part applies the radio operator must, while at sea, carry out the appropriate equipment tests and battery and reserve energy checks communicated by the Authority from time to time and record this in the radio log required by regulation 30. Where the ship has two or more radio operators, the master must designate one of them to carry out those tests and checks.

(8) If any of the radio installation required by this Part is not in a working condition, the radio operator discovering the deficiency must on discovery, report that fact to the master and record the details in the ship's official logbook or in the radio logbook required by regulation 30, as the case requires

Radio Personnel

29.(1) Every ship to which this Part applies must carry the number appropriately qualified radio operators as communicated by the Authority from time to time.

Radio Records

30. For all ships to which this Part applies,

(1) The following must be recorded, in the Radio Log as they occur-

(a) A summary of communications relating to distress, urgency and safety traffic and the time such communications occurred;
(b) A record of important incidents connected with the radio communication service and the time such incidents occurred;
(c) Where appropriate, the position of the ship at least once each day and the time at which the ship was in that position;
(d) Particulars of the tests and checks carried out pursuant to regulation 28(7);
(e) Particulars of the radio installation deficiencies pursuant to regulation 28(8); and
(f) Particulars of the ship and of the radio operator's on board;

(2) The master must, on demand, produce the radio log for inspection by a surveyor or a proper officer.

(3) the radio logbook to which this part applies shall be in the prescribed format as communicated by the Authority from time to time.

Position Updating

31. (1) All two-way communication equipment carried on board a ship to which this Part applies which is capable of automatically including the ship's position in the distress alert shall be automatically provided with this information from an internal or external navigation receiver.
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(2) In case of malfunction of the internal or external navigation receiver, the ship's position and the time at which the position was determined shall be manually updated at intervals not exceeding four hours, while the ship is under way, so that it is always ready for transmission by the equipment.

(3) All position updating equipment required by this part should comply with the requirements specifiified by the Authority from time to time.

Exemption from requirements of this Part

32.(1) The Authority may grant partial or conditional exemptions to individual ships from the requirements of regulations 24 and 25.

(2) When considering whether to exempt a ship from this part,
(a) such ships comply with the functional requirements of regulation 22; and

(b) the Authority must take into account the effect of such exemption on the ship's ability to maintain proper communication for distress and safety purposes.

(3) The Authority may, after notice, alter or cancel any exemption granted under subregulation (1).

PART 4 ENFORCEMENT

Inspection etc. of Convention ships not registered or licensed in Republic

33. (1) When considering whether a Convention ship that is neither registered nor licensed in the Republic complies with the requirements of these Regulations, a proper officer or a surveyor, as the case may be, need not satisfy himself or herself in relation to:

(a) regulation 6, if the equipment is of a type approved by the competent maritime authority of the State whose flag the ship is entitled to fly and that State is a Convention State; or
(b) regulation 6, if the ship is entitled to fly the flag of a Convention State.

Offences and penalties

34. (1) If a radio operator or a person designated under regulation 18 or 29 contravenes any provision of these Regulations imposing a duty on the radio operator or person, the radio operator or person commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months; and if any person, being the owner or master of the ship, permits such a contravention, the person also commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding one year.

(2) If these Regulations are contravened in any other respect in relation to any ship, the owner and master of the ship each commit an offence and are liable on conviction to a fine or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding one year.

Defence

35. It is a defence for a person charged under regulation 34 to show that the person took reasonable precautions and exercised due diligence to avoid the commission of the offence.

PART 5

FINAL PROVISIONS

Repeal of regulations

36. The Merchant Shipping (Radio Installations) Regulations, 2002 published by Government Notice No. R. 502 of 26 April 2002, as amended by Government Notices No. R. 457 of 02 July 2013.