



**TECHNICAL CIRCULAR No. 764 of 4<sup>th</sup> February 2023**

To	All Surveyors/Auditors. All flags
Title	<b>Non-SOLAS Ships Operating in Polar Waters</b>
Reference	SOLAS Chapter XIV

**Safety Measures for Non-SOLAS Ships Operating in Polar Waters**

The Committee approved draft amendments to SOLAS Chapter XIV for the implementation of safety measures under the Polar Code, for non-SOLAS ships operating in polar waters. These amendments will add a new draft Regulation 3-1 within SOLAS Chapter XIV, to identify new requirements in the Polar Code which will be applicable to the nonSOLAS ships under consideration.

Three specific ship profiles were targeted for application of these additional safety measures:

- 1) fishing vessels of 24 meters in overall length and above;
- 2) pleasure yachts of 300 gross tonnage and above not engaged in trade: and
- 3) cargo ships of 300 gross tonnage and above but below 500 gross tonnage.

The Committee also approved corresponding amendments to the Polar Code Part I-A to specify additional safety measures for non-SOLAS ships operating in polar waters.

Amendments were made to Chapter 9 (Safety of Navigation) and Chapter 11 (Voyage Planning) to insert new Chapters 9-1 and 11-1 that specially address the above listed ship profiles.

The new Chapter 9-1 addresses the functionality of navigational equipment in low temperatures and latitudes over 80 degrees, and the new Chapter 11-1 addresses the considerations that the master shall make when planning a route through polar waters.

For ships flying the flag of an Arctic state, these regulations will apply when the voyage is beyond the outer limit of the territorial sea of that Arctic state.

Additionally, because of the lack of SOLAS certification framework applicable to these types of ships, the Committee agreed that the certificate showing compliance with the newly introduced requirements of the Polar Code part I-A, chapters 9-1 and 11-1 should be left to discretion of the Flag Administration.

The above noted draft amendments will be adopted at MSC 107 (May 2023), and the anticipated date of entry into force for these amendments is 1 January 2026 for new vessels. These requirements will apply to existing vessels *one year after entry into force*.

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REFERENCES:

- SOLAS Chapter XIV; safety measures under the Polar Code

ATTACHMENTS: No

Kindest Regards,  
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