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Shipping Guidance Notice – 134

MGN 695 (M) - Training Standards for Crew Taking Part in Helicopter Operations on Large Commercial Yachts

To: Ship Owners, Operators, Master's and Crew

1 Purpose

The purpose of this Shipping Guidance Notice (SGN) is to promulgate UK MGN 695 (M) - Training Standards for Crew Taking Part in Helicopter Operations on Large Commercial Yachts

2 Application

MGN 695 (M) should be referenced in respect of the helideck crew training requirements contained in the Common Annexes of the REG Yacht Code

MGN 695 (M) is appended to this SGN, and is additionally available via; [MGN 695 \(M\)](#)

Steve Gomez
Chief Surveyor (Ag)

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Guidance

MGN 695 (M) - Training Standards for Crew Taking Part in Helicopter Operations on Large Commercial Yachts

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

In 2008, an industry Working Group was established by the Maritime & Coastguard Agency (MCA) to consider “Certification of equivalent courses” to the Offshore Petroleum Industry Training Organisation (OPITO) standard, which would be accepted by the UK Marine Administration under The Large Commercial Yacht Code and the Passenger Yacht Code.

In considering the issue of accepting an equivalent course the Working Group also had the objective of identifying the difficulties surrounding the achievement of the requirement and identifying how the requirements may be modified to more appropriately reflect the needs of the Large Yacht Industry.

In 2019 the Red Ensign Group (REG) published the REG Yacht Code. The new Code consists of two parts;

- Part A, being an update to the existing Large Yacht Code (LY3); and
- Part B, being an update to the Passenger Yacht Code 6th Edition (PYC).

The helideck crew training requirements are contained in the Common Annexes of the REG Yacht Code.

Following the changes in certification requirements with the introduction of the REG Yacht Code, including the removal of reference to OPITO standards, an industry Working Group established in 2022 has reviewed the REG Yacht Code training requirements and amended the “[Large Yacht Helideck Safety Training \(https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/large-yacht-helideck-safety-training-syllabuses\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/large-yacht-helideck-safety-training-syllabuses)” course syllabuses to meet these requirements.

The REG Yacht Code requires that Helicopter Landing Officers (HLOs) and Helideck Assistants (HDAs) are trained by an ‘appropriate training provider’. Completion of the MCA approved “Large Yacht Helideck Safety Training” courses are considered to meet these requirements.

Reasonable transition periods to the amended course syllabuses will be agreed on a case-by-case basis with the approved training providers.

The REG Yacht Code also requires that where there are refuelling facilities onboard, at least one member of crew shall be trained in the handling of aviation fuel and associated quality control procedures. The MCA approved “Large Yacht Helideck Safety Training” refuelling course only covers the handling of aviation fuel. Therefore, at least one member of the crew must have undertaken appropriate training in aviation fuel quality control procedures.

2. Guidance Available

As a result of the 2022 industry Working Group's meetings the "[Large Yacht Helideck Safety Training \(https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/large-yacht-helideck-safety-training-syllabuses\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/large-yacht-helideck-safety-training-syllabuses)" has been published on the gov.uk and is available separately to this notice.

The 2022 industry Working Group has withdrawn the following documents:

- Large Commercial Yacht Helicopter Operations Handbook
- Large Commercial Yacht Helicopter Refuelling Handbook

This decision was made on the basis that the REG Yacht Code requires each helicopter facility (including any refueling and hangar facilities) shall have an operations manual, including a description and a checklist of safety precautions, procedures and equipment requirements. This manual may be part of the ship's emergency response procedures. In addition, operators may find it useful to refer to industry publications and guidance, such as the International Chamber of Shipping's Guide to Helicopter/ Ship Operations and relevant International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) publications.

Courses approved by the MCA and run in accordance with the requirements set down in the "[Large Yacht Helideck Safety Training \(https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/large-yacht-helideck-safety-training-syllabuses\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/large-yacht-helideck-safety-training-syllabuses)" will be considered as meeting the training requirements of the REG Yacht Code.

3. Approval of Courses

Providers wishing to run a course in accordance with the syllabus produced should contact the MCA Seafarer Examiners and Technical Delivery Team stc.courses@mcga.gov.uk for further information on course approval.

4. Certification

On successful completion of an MCA approved course, a course pass certificate for an HLO or HDA may be issued by an MCA approved training provider.

5. More Information

Seafarer Customer Maritime Services
Maritime and Coastguard Agency,
Bay 2/13
Spring Place,
105 Commercial Road,
Southampton,
SO15 1EG.

Email: stc.courses@mcga.gov.uk

Website Address: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/maritime-and-coastguard-agency

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