



STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS.

**S.I. No. 280 of 2021**



MERCHANT SHIPPING (SOLAS V - NAVIGATION BRIDGE  
VISIBILITY) (CONSTRUCTION) RULES 2021

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VISIBILITY) (CONSTRUCTION) RULES 2021

I, HILDEGARDE NAUGHTON, Minister of State at the Department of Transport, in exercise of the powers conferred on me by section 10(4) (inserted by section 7 of the Merchant Shipping Act 2010 (No. 14 of 2010)) of the Merchant Shipping (Safety Convention) Act 1952 (No. 29 of 1952), and section 3(2) (inserted by section 12 of the Merchant Shipping Act 2010) of the Merchant Shipping Act 1966 (No. 20 of 1966) (as adapted by the Transport, Tourism and Sport (Alteration of Name of Department and Title of Minister) Order 2020 (S.I. No. 351 of 2020)), and the Transport (Delegation of Ministerial Functions) Order 2020 (S.I. No. 759 of 2020), hereby make the following rules:

**Citation**

1. These Rules may be cited as the Merchant Shipping (SOLAS V - Navigation Bridge Visibility) (Construction) Rules 2021.

**Definitions**

2. In these Rules –

"constructed" in respect of a ship means a stage of construction where –

- (a) the keel is laid,
- (b) construction identifiable with a specific ship begins, or
- (c) assembly of that ship has commenced comprising at least 50 tonnes or 1 per cent of the estimated mass of all structural material, whichever is less;

"IMO" means the International Maritime Organization;

"length" in respect of a ship means the overall length of the ship;

"MSO" means the Marine Survey Office of the Department of Transport.

**Navigation bridge visibility – newer ships**

3. Every ship of 55 metres or more in length, constructed on or after 1 July 1998, shall comply with the following:

- (a) the view of the sea surface from the conning position shall not be obscured by more than 2 ship lengths, or 500 metres, whichever is the less, forward of the bow to 10° on either side under all conditions of draught, trim and deck cargo;
- (b) (i) no blind sector, caused by cargo, cargo gear or other obstructions outside of the wheelhouse forward of the beam which obstructs the view of the sea surface as seen from the conning position, shall exceed 10°,

- (ii) the total arc of blind sectors shall not exceed 20°, and
- (iii) the clear sectors between blind sectors shall be at least 5°, however, in the view described in paragraph (a), each individual blind sector shall not exceed 5°;
- (c) the horizontal field of vision from the conning position shall extend over an arc of not less than 225° that is from right ahead to not less than 22.5° abaft the beam on either side of the ship;
- (d) from each bridge wing the horizontal field of vision shall extend over an arc at least 225° that is from at least 45° on the opposite bow through right ahead and then from right ahead to right astern through 180° on the same side of the ship;
- (e) from the main steering position the horizontal field of vision shall extend over an arc from right ahead to at least 60° on each side of the ship;
- (f) the ship's side shall be visible from the bridge wing;
- (g) the height of the lower edge of the navigation bridge front windows above the bridge deck shall be kept as low as possible. In no case shall the lower edge present an obstruction to the forward view as described in these Rules;
- (h) the upper edge of the navigation bridge front windows shall allow a forward view of the horizon, for a person with a height of eye of 1,800 millimetres above the bridge deck at the conning position, when the ship is pitching in heavy seas;

#### **Navigation bridge window**

- (i) windows shall meet the following requirements –
  - (i) to help avoid reflections, the bridge front windows shall be inclined from the vertical plane top out, at an angle of not less than 10° and not more than 25°,
  - (ii) framing between navigation bridge windows shall be kept to a minimum and not be installed immediately forward of any workstation,
  - (iii) polarized and tinted navigation bridge windows shall not be fitted, and
  - (iv) a clear view through at least two of the navigation bridge front windows and, depending on the bridge configuration, an additional number of clear-view windows shall be provided at all times, regardless of weather conditions;
- (j) in relation to a ship contracted for construction on or after 1 January 2011, the IMO unified interpretations of SOLAS Chapter V (MSC.1/Circ.1350/Rev.1).

**Navigation bridge visibility – older ships**

4. (1) Every ship of 55 metres or more in length constructed before 1 July 1998 shall, where practicable, comply with the requirements of paragraphs 3(a) and (b) of Rule 3.

(2) Paragraph (1) does not require the making of structural alterations or the supply of additional equipment.

**Exemptions**

5. (1) The MSO may exempt a ship of unconventional design from complying with these Rules.

(2) Each ship exempted under paragraph (1) shall make arrangements to achieve a level of visibility that is as near as practical to that prescribed in these Rules.

**Ballast water exchange**

6. Notwithstanding the requirements of paragraphs (a), (c), (d) and (e) of Rule 3, a ship may undertake ballast water exchange provided that -

- (a) the master has determined that it is safe to do so and takes into consideration any increased blind sectors or reduced horizontal fields of vision resulting from the operation to ensure that a proper lookout is maintained at all times,
- (b) the operation is conducted in accordance with the ship's ballast water management plan, taking into account the recommendations on ballast water exchange adopted by the IMO, and
- (c) the commencement and termination of the operation are recorded in the ship's ballast water record book.

GIVEN under my hand,  
9 June 2021

HILDEGARDE NAUGHTON,  
Minister of State at the Department of Transport.

## EXPLANATORY NOTE

*(This note is not part of the Instrument and does not purport to be a legal interpretation.)*

These Rules implement Chapter V of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) 1974, and subsequent Protocols and amendments, up to and including those adopted by the 90th Session of the Maritime Safety Committee of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in May 2012, in particular Regulation 22 in relation to navigation bridge visibility. The Rules require ships to comply with IMO standards regarding visibility from the navigation bridge, ensuring no blind sectors are caused by cargo or other obstructions and navigation bridge window requirements. These Rules apply to sea-going Irish passenger ships and Irish ships (other than fishing vessels) of 55 metres in length or over.

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