

Isle of Man Ship Registry Technical Advisory Notice

Prohibition on Use of Perfluorooctane Sulfonic Acid (PFOS) in Fire-Extinguishing Media

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1. Introduction

To protect seafarers and the marine environment from exposure to dangerous chemicals, the IMO has issued an amendment to SOLAS prohibiting the use of Perfluorooctane Sulfonic Acid (PFOS) in fire-extinguishing media.

PFOS is part of a wider group of chemicals known as PFAS, per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances. These chemicals are characterised by strong fluorine-carbon bonds that make the chemicals virtually indestructible. This characteristic makes them ideally suited for firefighting applications but also means they are persistently present in an environment long after they are applied.

The chemicals have been shown to build up in the body and environment over time and have significant negative effects on health.

2. Application

The requirements of the amendment will apply to all ships subject to the requirements of SOLAS II-2 as follows:

- To new ships constructed on or after 1 January 2026;
- Ships constructed before 1 January 2026 must comply with the requirements no later than the first annual, renewal or periodical survey on or after 1 January 2026.

3. Requirements

The amendment introduces two requirements:

- Use or storage of extinguishing media containing PFOS is prohibited.
- When removed from the ship, substances containing PFOS must be delivered to appropriate shore-based reception facilities.

4. More Information

- MSC.532(107) - Amendments to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974

Please note - The Isle of Man Ship Registry cannot give legal advice. Where this document provides guidance on the law it should not be regarded as definitive. The way the law applies to any particular case can vary according to circumstances - for example, from vessel to vessel. You should consider seeking independent legal advice if you are unsure of your own legal position.

