

Isle of Man Ship Registry Manx Shipping Notice

Code of Safe Working Practices (COSWP) – Carriage Onboard Manx Ships	Ref. MSN 077 Issued: 26/05/2026
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1. Introduction

This Manx Shipping Notice (MSN) outlines the Isle of Man Ship Registry's policy on carriage of the UK Maritime and Coastguard Agency's Code of Safe Working Practices for Merchant Seafarers (COSWP) on Manx-registered ships. COSWP provides advice on safe working practices and effective health and safety management at sea.

2. Application

This MSN applies to all Manx ships except fishing vessels and pleasure craft. Masters and shipowners must ensure compliance in accordance with the Merchant Shipping (Code of Safe Working Practices) Regulations 1989.

3. Implementation and Use

To comply with the Merchant Shipping (Code of Safe Working Practices) Regulations 1989, Masters and shipowners should ensure adequate copies of COSWP are available for reference on board. On ships with up to 15 persons, at least two copies of COSWP should be carried—one held by the Master and one in a location accessible to seafarers.

For ships with more than 15 persons, the Regulations specify that individual copies of COSWP must be carried for the:

- Master
- Chief Officer
- Chief Engineer
- Purser or Catering Officer
- the Safety Officer (if appointed)
- the Safety Representative (if appointed), and
- for any member of an Accident Prevention Committee who requests one

In addition, at least one reference copy of COSWP must be carried for every 25 seafarers, stored in different places around the ship (including the ship's library, if any) and accompanied by no fewer than three notices indicating their locations. The Master, Chief Officer, Chief Engineer and Safety Officer should ensure a copy is provided to any seafarer upon request.

The Ship Registry determines that the carriage requirement(s) outlined above may be met by having an electronic copy of COSWP available, so long as these may be readily accessed by all seafarers. If choosing to comply with the carriage requirements via electronic copies of the COSWP, these should be stored locally so as to be available at all times. An appropriate number of licences must also be available.

In all cases the Master (and for ships with more than 15 persons the Chief Officer, Chief Engineer, Purser or Catering Officer and Safety Officer if appointed) should ensure a copy of



COSWP is made available to a seafarer upon request. Copies of COSWP should not be removed from the ship without the consent of the Master or shipowner.

For the avoidance of doubt, Isle of Man Regulations do not necessarily require compliance with the procedures outlined within COSWP. Instead, the Code serves as a reference guide for safety, allowing operators the flexibility to follow their own approved Safety Management Systems (SMS).

Please note that certain sections of the Code may refer to specific UK legislation or guidance that does not apply to Isle of Man registered vessels; if you require clarification on the equivalent Isle of Man legislation, please contact marine.survey@gov.im.

4. Updates and Editions

In accordance with regulation 1(3) of the Merchant Shipping (Code of Safe Working Practices) Regulations 1989 references to 'Code' in the Regulations are a reference to the UK's Code of Safe Working Practices for Merchant Seafarers - 2026 Edition.

5. Sources

The following is a non-exhaustive list of sources from which copies of the Code (either paper or electronic) may be purchased.

- [Witherby's Publishing](#)
- [Marine Society](#)
- [TSO Shop](#)

Additionally, the Code may be accessed on the Isle of Man area of Regs4Ships on the OneOcean platform, for those clients with a subscription.

A [reference copy of the Code](#) may be accessed from the MCA website. Please note that as stated in the PDF, this is not for use onboard

Reference Material:

Documents referred to in this MSN:

- Merchant Shipping (Code of Safe Working Practices) Regulations 1989
- Code of Safe Working Practices for Merchant Seafarers

Most Regulations and notices are available on the Isle of Man Government website: www.iomshipregistry.com or by contacting marine.survey@gov.im

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 ship to ship. You should consider seeking independent legal advice if you are unsure of your own legal position.

