

# Isle of Man Ship Registry Technical Advisory Notice

## OFCOM EMF Compliance Checks

Ref. 005-22  
Issued: 15/06/2022

### **1. Application**

This notice applies to all vessels holding an OFCOM radio licence and that have any of the equipment listed in section 3 onboard the vessel.

### **2. Introduction**

To protect the general public from the harmful effects of EMF emissions, OFCOM have introduced a condition to their Radio Licences requiring operators to perform a compliance check on certain equipment. The purpose of a compliance check is to establish whether the antenna of your radio equipment is far enough away from the general public when you are transmitting. In order to assess this, you will need to calculate the 'compliance distance'. A 'compliance distance' is the distance that must be maintained between a ship's antenna and members of the public in order to prevent harm.

As an OFCOM requirement, the Ship Registry is not able to offer advice on compliance with the protection criteria and seeks only to notify operators of the requirement to maintain compliance records. Where compliance is a concern, please refer to the [OFCOM guidance](#).

Please note no compliance requirements apply if equipment is being used in an emergency situation.

### **3. Equipment Requiring Compliance Checks**

Vessels installed with the following equipment will require a compliance check:

- Fixed marine band VHF Radiotelephone with or without DSC
- Marine band MF/HF radio
- GMDSS Satellite Earth Station - Inmarsat OR Iridium (this refers to the fixed transceiver)
- Radar

### **4. Calculating the Compliance Distance**

Dependent on the equipment, the compliance distance may be calculated by one of the following three methods:

- Referring to the manufacturer instructions on EMF compliance, or
- Checking against OFCOM's compliance distance table, or
- Using OFCOM's [EMF calculator](#)

### **5. Maintaining Records**

Records showing the safe distance and how it was calculated should be maintained and kept with your radio licence document. The nature of the records will depend upon the method used to calculate the compliance distance:

- Manufacturer instructions – A copy of the manufacturer's instructions on EMF
- OFCOM compliance tables - Save a screenshot/print a copy of the relevant table
- OFCOM's EMF calculator - Save the output/print a copy of the result

Note that records only require updating when you make changes to your radio equipment/usage likely to affect EMF emissions.

### **6. Maintaining the Compliance Distance**

Providing the compliance distance is established, recorded and the general public is unable to get within the safe distance, no further action is required. It is acceptable for areas within the compliance distance



to be accessed by crew and other workers but care should be taken to minimise exposure, if necessary by referring to manufacturer's instructions/guidelines.

If the general public are able to get within the Compliance Distance, then OFCOM suggests consideration of the following courses of action:

- i) Preventing members of the general public getting too close to the antenna by physical barriers/signage.
- ii) Switching off equipment, switching to low power, or reassessing transmission time (excluding emergencies).
- iii) Moving the antenna to a different location further away from the general public. Please note this may affect the stability of the vessel.

Operators should not consider removing safety radio equipment as a means of achieving compliance. This may hinder the ability to call for help in an emergency.

## **7. Key Dates**

- For most equipment types compliance records are required as of 18 November 2021.
- For Marine band MF/HF radio (frequencies between 10 MHz and 30 MHz) compliance records are required as of 18 May 2022.
- For Marine band MF/HF radio (frequencies below 10 MHz) compliance records should be available from 18 November 2022.



*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.*

