



BERMUDA MERCHANT SHIPPING NOTICE

Radio Regulations

2024-036

Application

This notice is for all owners and operators of maritime VHF radios. These requirements have now been delayed until 2028 in order to ensure availability of suitable equipment. VHF radiocommunication equipment should be updated following the first radio survey after 1 January 2028, at the earliest, so that it meets the arrangements that will be in force by then.

Summary

This Shipping Notice draws attention to the revised application date set out in IMO Circular MSC.1/Circ.1460/Rev.4 as it relates to the changes made to the 2020 International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Radio Regulations (RR) (Appendix 18) affecting VHF and HF communications and equipment.

The revised RR introduce a number of 4-digit VHF channels. Existing 2-digit international simplex channels remain unchanged. These changes do not affect existing maritime distress frequencies. From 2024 VHF Data Exchange System (VDES) channels are expected to be used in some regions.

References

MSC.1/Circ.1460/Rev.4 – Guidance On The Validity Of Radiocommunications Equipment Installed And Used On Ships.

MSC.1/Circ.1389 – Guidance On Procedures For Updating Shipborne Navigation And Communication Equipment.

This Notice was issued on 3rd January 2024.

1. Guidance

- (1) By the first radio survey after 1 January 2028 all vessels using VHF radio should meet the channelling arrangements set out in Appendix 18 of the 2020 RR.
- (2) Meantime a 4-digit channel VHF radio may be required to interact with coastal stations who have adopted these frequencies. Radio operators should consult the Admiralty List of Radio Signals to confirm where the use of a channel for voice is permitted and ensure that the on-board equipment can operate on the frequencies necessary for the ship's area of operation, e.g. to communicate with ports and coast stations.
- (3) Where a frequency is supported by equipment in accordance with regulation but the channel indication is no longer correct a cross-reference table must be kept at the operating station.
- (4) Where VDES channels are used interference caused by voice communications on these channels should be avoided.