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*Status: Point in time view as at 09/06/2020.*

**Changes to legislation:** *There are currently no known outstanding effects for the The Merchant Shipping (Vessels in Commercial Use for Sport or Pleasure) Regulations 1998. (See end of Document for details)*

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STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

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**1998 No. 2771**

**MERCHANT SHIPPING  
SAFETY**

**The Merchant Shipping (Vessels in Commercial  
Use for Sport or Pleasure) Regulations 1998**

*Made - - - - 11th November 1998*  
*Laid before Parliament 20th November 1998*  
*Coming into force - - 16th December 1998*

The Secretary of State of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, after consulting the persons referred to in section 86(4) of the Merchant Shipping Act 1995<sup>M1</sup>, in exercise of the powers conferred by section 85(1)(a) and (b), (3) and (5) to (7) and section 86(1) of that Act, and of all other powers enabling him in that behalf, hereby makes the following Regulations:

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**Marginal Citations**

**M1** 1995 c. 21; sections 85 and 86 were amended by the [Merchant Shipping and Maritime Security Act 1997 \(c. 8\)](#), section 8.

1.—(1) These Regulations may be cited as the Merchant Shipping (Vessels in Commercial Use for Sport or Pleasure) Regulations 1998 and shall come into force on 16th December 1998.

(2) The Merchant Shipping (Vessels in Commercial Use for Sport or Pleasure) Regulations 1993<sup>M2</sup> are hereby revoked: provided that such revocation shall not affect the amendments made by regulation 3 of those Regulations to the statutory instruments listed in Schedule 2 to those Regulations.

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**Marginal Citations**

**M2** [S.I. 1993/1072](#).

**Interpretation**

2.—(1) In these Regulations—

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[<sup>F1</sup>“EEA Agreement” and “EEA State” have the meaning given by Schedule 1 to the Interpretation Act 1978.]

“large vessel” means a vessel which is not a small vessel;

“Maritime and Coastguard Agency” means the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, an executive agency of the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions;

“pleasure vessel” means—

- (a) any vessel which at the time it is being used is:
  - (i) (aa) in the case of a vessel wholly owned by an individual or individuals, used only for the sport or pleasure of the owner or the immediate family or friends of the owner; or
  - (bb) in the case of a vessel owned by a body corporate, used only for sport or pleasure and on which the persons on board are employees or officers of the body corporate, or their immediate family or friends; and
  - (ii) on a voyage or excursion which is one for which the owner does not receive money for or in connection with operating the vessel or carrying any person, other than as a contribution to the direct expenses of the operation of the vessel incurred during the voyage or excursion; or
- (b) any vessel wholly owned by or on behalf of a members’ club formed for the purpose of sport or pleasure which, at the time it is being used, is used only for the sport or pleasure of members of that club or their immediate family, and for the use of which any charges levied are paid into club funds and applied for the general use of the club; and
- (c) in the case of any vessel referred to in paragraphs (a) or (b) above no other payments are made by or on behalf of users of the vessel, other than by the owner.

In this definition “immediate family” means—

in relation to an individual, the [<sup>F2</sup>spouse or civil partner] of the individual, and a relative of the individual or the individual’s [<sup>F2</sup>spouse or civil partner]; and “relative” means brother, sister, ancestor or lineal descendant;

“small vessel” means a vessel of less than 24 metres in load line length or, in the case of a vessel the keel of which was laid or which was at a similar stage of construction before 21st July 1968, less than 150 tons; and in this definition—

“load line length” means the greater of the following distances, measured at and along the waterline—

- (a) the distance between the foreside of the stem and the axis of the rudder stock; or
- (b) a distance measured from the foreside of the stem, being 96 per cent of the distance between that point and the aft side of the stern.

The waterline referred to in this definition shall be at 85 per cent of the least moulded depth of the vessel. In the case of a vessel having a rake of keel, the waterline shall be parallel to the designed waterline;

“similar stage of construction” means a stage at which

- (a) construction identifiable with a specific vessel begins; and
- (b) assembly of that vessel, comprising at least 1% of the estimated mass of all structural material has commenced; and

“tons” means gross tons, measured in accordance with the Regulations for measuring tonnage in force on 20th July 1968.

(2) References to Codes of Practice in these Regulations are references to the Codes of those names published (or treated as published) by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, and include any document amending the same which the Secretary of State considers relevant from time to time.

(3) Any reference in these Regulations to "proceeding to sea" includes a reference to proceeding on a voyage or excursion that does not involve going to sea.

#### Textual Amendments

- F1** Words in reg. 2(1) substituted (7.8.2014) by [The Merchant Shipping \(Maritime Labour Convention\) \(Consequential and Minor Amendments\) Regulations 2014 \(S.I. 2014/1614\)](#), regs. 1, **11(2)**
- F2** Words in reg. 2(1) substituted (5.12.2005) by [The Civil Partnership Act 2004 \(Amendments to Subordinate Legislation\) Order 2005 \(S.I. 2005/2114\)](#), arts. 1, 2(15), **Sch. 15**

#### Application

**3.—**(1) Subject to paragraphs (2) and (3) below, these Regulations apply to any vessel used for sport or pleasure which is not a pleasure vessel.

(2) These Regulations apply—

- (a) to United Kingdom vessels wherever they may be; and
- (b) to other vessels operating from United Kingdom ports whilst in United Kingdom waters.

(3) These Regulations do not apply to vessels carrying more than twelve passengers.

#### Commercially operated large vessels complying with Code of Practice

**4.—**[<sup>F3</sup>(1)] This regulation applies only to large vessels.

[<sup>F4</sup>(1A)] In this regulation, "Code of Practice" means the Code of Practice for Safety of Large Commercial Sailing and Motor Vessels.

(2) Vessels shall comply with the provisions of the Code of Practice and accordingly any provision of the Code of Practice expressed in the conditional (i.e. "should") shall be a requirement.

[<sup>F5</sup>(3) The following provisions do not apply to a vessel which has been examined, and in respect of which appropriate certificates have been issued, in accordance with the Code of Practice—

- (a) the statutory instruments listed in Schedule 1; and
- (b) regulations 29(2) and 30 of the Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour Convention) (Minimum Requirements for Seafarers etc.) Regulations 2014 (crew accommodation requirements and provision for certain older ships)]

(4) Where a vessel has been so examined and appropriate certificates issued, the vessel shall not proceed or attempt to proceed to sea unless:

- (a) the certificates are currently in force; and
- (b) the vessel complies with the applicable requirements of the Code of Practice (including any requirements as to operation, manning and maintenance).

#### Textual Amendments

- F3** Reg. 4(1) formed from reg. 4(1)(a) (6.4.2018) by [The Merchant Shipping \(Maritime Labour Convention\) \(Miscellaneous Amendments\) Regulations 2018 \(S.I. 2018/242\)](#), regs. 1, **2(2)(a)**
- F4** Reg. 4(1A) formed from reg. 4(1)(b) (6.4.2018) by [The Merchant Shipping \(Maritime Labour Convention\) \(Miscellaneous Amendments\) Regulations 2018 \(S.I. 2018/242\)](#), regs. 1, **2(2)(b)**

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**F5** Reg. 4(3) substituted (6.4.2018) by [The Merchant Shipping \(Maritime Labour Convention\) \(Miscellaneous Amendments\) Regulations 2018 \(S.I. 2018/242\)](#), regs. 1, **2(2)(c)**

**Commercially operated small vessels complying with a Code of Practice**

5.—(1) This regulation applies only to small vessels.

(2) In this regulation:

(a) “Code of Practice” means “The Safety of Small Commercial Sailing Vessels—A Code of Practice”, or “The Safety of Small Commercial Motor Vessels—A Code of Practice” [<sup>F6</sup>or “The Safety of Small Vessels in Commercial Use for Sport or Pleasure Operating from a Nominated Departure Point—A Code of Practice”];

[<sup>F7</sup>(aa) “Marine Guidance Note 490(M) Amendment 1” means the note described as such published by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency in September 2014;

(ab) “Marine Guidance Note 491(M) Amendment 1” means the note described as such published by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency in September 2014;] and

(b) “the phase-in arrangements of the Code of Practice” means such arrangements set out in the relevant paragraphs of a Code of Practice.

[<sup>F8</sup>(3) The following provisions do not apply to a vessel which satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3A)—

(a) the statutory instruments listed in Schedule 2;

(b) regulations 29(2) and 30 of the Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour Convention) (Minimum Requirements for Seafarers etc.) Regulations 2014 (crew accommodation requirements and provision for certain older ships).

(3A) The requirements are that the vessel—

(a) has been examined and has been issued with a small commercial vessel certificate in accordance with the applicable Code of Practice; and

(b) in the case of a vessel the keel of which was laid or which was at a similar stage of construction on or after 7th August 2014, complies with the standards set out in—

(i) where the vessel is less than 200 tons, Annex 1 to Marine Guidance Note 490(M) Amendment 1; or

(ii) where the vessel is 200 tons or more but less than 500 tons, Annex 1 to Marine Guidance Note 491(M) Amendment 1.]

(4) Where a vessel has been so examined and a small commercial vessel certificate issued, the vessel shall not proceed, or attempt to proceed, to sea unless:

(a) the certificate is currently in force;

(b) the vessel complies with the requirements of the relevant Code of Practice (including any requirements as to operation, manning and maintenance); and for this purpose any provision of the Code expressed in the conditional (i.e. “should”) shall be a requirement; and

(c) the certificate is displayed in some conspicuous place on board; or, if this is not reasonably practicable, is available for inspection on board.

[<sup>F9</sup>(5) .....

### Textual Amendments

- F6** Words in reg. 5(2)(a) inserted (1.4.2000) by [The Merchant Shipping \(Vessels in Commercial Use for Sport or Pleasure\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2000 \(S.I. 2000/482\)](#), regs. 1, **2(a)**
- F7** Reg. 5(2)(aa)(ab) inserted (6.4.2018) by [The Merchant Shipping \(Maritime Labour Convention\) \(Miscellaneous Amendments\) Regulations 2018 \(S.I. 2018/242\)](#), regs. 1, **2(3)(a)**
- F8** Reg. 5(3)(3A) substituted for reg. 5(3) (6.4.2018) by [The Merchant Shipping \(Maritime Labour Convention\) \(Miscellaneous Amendments\) Regulations 2018 \(S.I. 2018/242\)](#), regs. 1, **2(3)(b)**
- F9** Reg. 5(5) omitted (6.4.2018) by virtue of [The Merchant Shipping \(Maritime Labour Convention\) \(Miscellaneous Amendments\) Regulations 2018 \(S.I. 2018/242\)](#), regs. 1, **2(3)(c)**

### Equivalent provisions

6. Where these Regulations or a Code of Practice require that a particular piece of equipment or machinery shall be provided or carried in a vessel to which these Regulations apply, or that any particular provision shall be made, the Secretary of State shall permit any other piece of equipment or machinery to be provided or carried or any other provision to be made in that vessel if he is satisfied by trial thereof or otherwise that such other fitting, material, appliance or apparatus, or type thereof, or provision is at least as effective as that required by these Regulations or the Code of Practice.

7. For the purpose of these Regulations, the results of verifications and tests carried out by the bodies and laboratories of other EEA States offering suitable and satisfactory guarantees of technical and professional competence and independence shall be accepted.

### Penalties

8.—(1) Contravention of any of these Regulations shall be an offence by the owner and the master of the vessel which shall render both of them liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding the statutory maximum, or on conviction on indictment to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years, or a fine, or both.

(2) It shall be a good defence to a charge under this regulation to prove that the person charged took all reasonable steps to avoid commission of the offence.

### Power to detain

9. In any case where a vessel does not comply with the requirements of these Regulations, the vessel shall be liable to be detained and section 284 of the Merchant Shipping Act 1995 (which relates to the detention of a ship) shall have effect in relation to the vessel, subject to the modification that as if for the words “this Act” wherever they appear, there were substituted “the Merchant Shipping (Vessels in Commercial Use for Sport or Pleasure) Regulations 1998”.

### [<sup>F10</sup>Review

10.—(1) The Secretary of State must from time to time—

- (a) carry out a review of these Regulations;
- (b) set out the conclusions of the review in a report, and
- (c) publish the report.

(2) In carrying out the review the Secretary of State must, so far as is reasonable, have regard to how the European obligations or any other international obligations of the United Kingdom

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(which are implemented by means of these Regulations) are implemented in other member States or countries which are subject to those obligations.

(3) The report must in particular—

- (a) set out the objectives intended to be achieved by the regulatory system established by these Regulations,
- (b) assess the extent to which those objectives are achieved, and
- (c) assess whether those objectives remain appropriate and, if so, the extent to which they could be achieved with a system that imposes less regulation.

(4) The first report under this regulation must be published before the end of the period of five years beginning with 6th April 2016.

(5) Reports under this regulation are afterwards to be published at intervals not exceeding five years.]

**Textual Amendments**

**F10** Reg. 10 inserted (6.4.2016) by [The Merchant Shipping \(Vessels in Commercial Use for Sport or Pleasure\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016 \(S.I. 2016/353\)](#), regs. 1(1), 2

Signed by authority of the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions

*Glenda Jackson*  
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State,  
Department of the Environment, Transport and  
the Regions

## SCHEDULE 1

Regulation 4

## LARGE VESSELS

## STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS DISAPPLIED IF VESSELS COMPLY WITH THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR SAFETY OF LARGE COMMERCIAL SAILING AND MOTOR VESSELS

The statutory instruments listed below are those referred to in regulation 4 of these Regulations.

<i>F<sup>11</sup></i> Statutory Instruments	<i>SINo.</i>	<i>Amended by – SINo.</i>
The Merchant Shipping (Cargo Ship Construction) Regulations 1997	1997/1509	1999/643; 2004/302; 2004/2151; 2005/2114
The Merchant Shipping (Fire Protection: Small Ships) Regulations 1998	1998/1011	1999/992; 1999/1957; 2000/2687; 2003/2951; 2004/302; 2005/2114; 2010/680; 2010/1075
The Merchant Shipping (Fire Protection: Large Ships) Regulations 1998	1998/1012	1999/992; 1999/1957; 2000/2687; 2001/1638; 0 2003/2950; 2003/2951; 2004/302; 2005/2114
The Merchant Shipping (Radio Installations) Regulations 1998	1998/2070	1999/1957; 2000/2687; 2001/1638; 2004/302; 2005/2114; 2011/1043
The Merchant Shipping (Load Line) Regulations 1998	1998/2241	2000/1335; 2005/2114; 2011/603
The Merchant Shipping (Marine Equipment) Regulations 1999	1999/1957	2001/1638; 2004/302; 2004/1266; 2009/2021; 2011/1043
F12 ...	F12 ...	F12 ...
The Merchant Shipping (Safety of Navigation) Regulations 2002	2002/1473	2002/2626; 2004/302; 2004/2110; 2005/2114; 2010/680; 2010/1075; 2011/2978
F13 ...	F13 ...	
The Merchant Shipping (Survey and Certification) Regulations 2015	2015/508	

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<i>[<sup>F11</sup>Statutory Instruments</i>	<i>SINo.</i>	<i>Amended by – SINo.</i>
The Merchant Shipping (Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping) Regulations 2015	<a href="#">2015/782</a>	
[ <sup>F14</sup> The Merchant Shipping (Life-Saving Appliances and Arrangements) Regulations 2020]	[ <sup>F15</sup> 2020/501]	

#### Textual Amendments

- F11** Table in Sch. 1 substituted (6.4.2016) by [The Merchant Shipping \(Vessels in Commercial Use for Sport or Pleasure\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016 \(S.I. 2016/353\)](#), regs. 1(1), 3(1), **Sch. 1**
- F12** Words in Sch. 1 omitted (9.6.2020) by virtue of [The Merchant Shipping \(Life-Saving Appliances and Arrangements\) Regulations 2020 \(S.I. 2020/501\)](#), reg. 1, **Sch. 1 para. 7(a)** (with reg. 4)
- F13** Sch. 1 entry omitted (6.4.2018) by virtue of [The Merchant Shipping \(Maritime Labour Convention\) \(Miscellaneous Amendments\) Regulations 2018 \(S.I. 2018/242\)](#), regs. 1, **2(4)**
- F14** Words in Sch. 1 inserted (9.6.2020) by [The Merchant Shipping \(Life-Saving Appliances and Arrangements\) Regulations 2020 \(S.I. 2020/501\)](#), reg. 1, **Sch. 1 para. 7(b)(i)** (with reg. 4)
- F15** Word in Sch. 1 inserted (9.6.2020) by [The Merchant Shipping \(Life-Saving Appliances and Arrangements\) Regulations 2020 \(S.I. 2020/501\)](#), reg. 1, **Sch. 1 para. 7(b)(ii)** (with reg. 4)

#### Textual Amendments

- F11** Table in Sch. 1 substituted (6.4.2016) by [The Merchant Shipping \(Vessels in Commercial Use for Sport or Pleasure\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016 \(S.I. 2016/353\)](#), regs. 1(1), 3(1), **Sch. 1**
- F12** Words in Sch. 1 omitted (9.6.2020) by virtue of [The Merchant Shipping \(Life-Saving Appliances and Arrangements\) Regulations 2020 \(S.I. 2020/501\)](#), reg. 1, **Sch. 1 para. 7(a)** (with reg. 4)
- F13** Sch. 1 entry omitted (6.4.2018) by virtue of [The Merchant Shipping \(Maritime Labour Convention\) \(Miscellaneous Amendments\) Regulations 2018 \(S.I. 2018/242\)](#), regs. 1, **2(4)**
- F14** Words in Sch. 1 inserted (9.6.2020) by [The Merchant Shipping \(Life-Saving Appliances and Arrangements\) Regulations 2020 \(S.I. 2020/501\)](#), reg. 1, **Sch. 1 para. 7(b)(i)** (with reg. 4)
- F15** Word in Sch. 1 inserted (9.6.2020) by [The Merchant Shipping \(Life-Saving Appliances and Arrangements\) Regulations 2020 \(S.I. 2020/501\)](#), reg. 1, **Sch. 1 para. 7(b)(ii)** (with reg. 4)

## SCHEDULE 2

Regulation 5

### SMALL VESSELS

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS DISAPPLIED IF VESSELS COMPLY WITH THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR SAFETY OF SMALL COMMERCIAL MOTOR VESSELS OR SMALL COMMERCIAL SAILING VESSELS [<sup>F16</sup>OR SMALL VESSELS IN COMMERCIAL USE FOR SPORT OR PLEASURE OPERATING FROM A NOMINATED DEPARTURE POINT]

#### Textual Amendments

- F16** Words in Sch. 2 heading added (1.4.2000) by [The Merchant Shipping \(Vessels in Commercial Use for Sport or Pleasure\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2000 \(S.I. 2000/482\)](#), regs. 1, **2(b)**



The statutory instruments listed below are those referred to in regulation 5 of these Regulations.

<i>[<sup>F17</sup>Statutory Instruments</i>	<i>SINo.</i>	<i>Amended by – SINo.</i>
The Merchant Shipping (Fire Protection: Small Ships) Regulations 1998	1998/1011	1999/992; 1999/1957; 2000/2687; 2003/2951;  2004/302; 2005/2114; 2010/680; 2010/1075
The Merchant Shipping (Load Line) Regulations 1998	1998/2241	2000/1335; 2005/2114; 2011/603
The Merchant Shipping (Marine Equipment) Regulations 1999	1999/1957	2001/1638; 2004/302; 2004/1266; 2009/2021; 2011/1043
F18 ...	F18 ...	F18 ...
The Merchant Shipping (Safety of Navigation) Regulations 2002	2002/1473	2002/2626; 2004/302; 2004/2110; 2005/2114; 2010/680; 2010/1075; 2011/2978
The Merchant Shipping (Fire Protection) Regulations 2003	2003/2950	2005/2114
F19 ...	F19 ...	
The Merchant Shipping (Survey and Certification) Regulations 2015	2015/508	
The Merchant Shipping (Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping) Regulations 2015	2015/782	
[ <sup>F20</sup> The Merchant Shipping (Life-Saving Appliances and Arrangements) Regulations 2020]	[ <sup>F21</sup> 2020/501]	

### Textual Amendments

- F17** Table in Sch. 2 substituted (6.4.2016) by The Merchant Shipping (Vessels in Commercial Use for Sport or Pleasure) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 (S.I. 2016/353), regs. 1(1), 3(2), **Sch. 2**
- F18** Words in Sch. 2 omitted (9.6.2020) by virtue of The Merchant Shipping (Life-Saving Appliances and Arrangements) Regulations 2020 (S.I. 2020/501), reg. 1, **Sch. 1 para. 8(a)** (with reg. 4)
- F19** Sch. 2 entry omitted (6.4.2018) by virtue of The Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour Convention) (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2018 (S.I. 2018/242), regs. 1, **2(5)**
- F20** Words in Sch. 2 inserted (9.6.2020) by The Merchant Shipping (Life-Saving Appliances and Arrangements) Regulations 2020 (S.I. 2020/501), reg. 1, **Sch. 1 para. 8(b)(i)** (with reg. 4)
- F21** Word in Sch. 2 inserted (9.6.2020) by The Merchant Shipping (Life-Saving Appliances and Arrangements) Regulations 2020 (S.I. 2020/501), reg. 1, **Sch. 1 para. 8(b)(ii)** (with reg. 4)

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#### Textual Amendments

- F17** Table in Sch. 2 substituted (6.4.2016) by [The Merchant Shipping \(Vessels in Commercial Use for Sport or Pleasure\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016 \(S.I. 2016/353\)](#), regs. 1(1), 3(2), **Sch. 2**
- F18** Words in Sch. 2 omitted (9.6.2020) by virtue of [The Merchant Shipping \(Life-Saving Appliances and Arrangements\) Regulations 2020 \(S.I. 2020/501\)](#), reg. 1, **Sch. 1 para. 8(a)** (with reg. 4)
- F19** Sch. 2 entry omitted (6.4.2018) by virtue of [The Merchant Shipping \(Maritime Labour Convention\) \(Miscellaneous Amendments\) Regulations 2018 \(S.I. 2018/242\)](#), regs. 1, **2(5)**
- F20** Words in Sch. 2 inserted (9.6.2020) by [The Merchant Shipping \(Life-Saving Appliances and Arrangements\) Regulations 2020 \(S.I. 2020/501\)](#), reg. 1, **Sch. 1 para. 8(b)(i)** (with reg. 4)
- F21** Word in Sch. 2 inserted (9.6.2020) by [The Merchant Shipping \(Life-Saving Appliances and Arrangements\) Regulations 2020 \(S.I. 2020/501\)](#), reg. 1, **Sch. 1 para. 8(b)(ii)** (with reg. 4)

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### EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Regulations)

These Regulations revoke and replace the Merchant Shipping (Vessels in Commercial Use for Sport or Pleasure) Regulations 1993.

The principal changes are—

1. the Regulations require compliance by larger vessels (over 24 metres in length, or for older vessels, over 150 gross tons) with the Code of Practice for Safety of Large Commercial Sailing and Motor Vessels (“the Megayacht Code”). Operation in accordance with the Code means that the Regulations listed in Schedule 1 will not apply to such vessels; and

2. the list of Regulations which do not apply to small vessels if they comply with a relevant Code of Practice, in Schedule 2, is updated.

A compliance cost assessment has been produced and a copy laid in the library of each House of Parliament. Copies may be obtained from the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, Spring Place, 105 Commercial Road, Southampton SO15 1EG (telephone 01703 329134).

The Codes of Practice referred to in the Regulations are obtainable from the Stationery Office.

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