



MSN 034

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DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Risk Assessment for ISM Code Compliance

The objective of this MSN is to clarify the practical implications of the amendments to the ISM Code 1.2.2.2 with respect to 'Risk Assessment', effective 1 July 2010.

Documents referred to in this notice:

ISM Code 2010 Edition

IMO Resolution MSC.273(85)

Most regulations and notices are available on the Isle of Man Government web site:  
[www.iomshipregistry.com](http://www.iomshipregistry.com) or by contacting [marine.survey@gov.im](mailto:marine.survey@gov.im)

### Introduction

At MSC 85, IMO adopted a number of amendments to the ISM Code that will enter into force on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2010. Among these changes was a revision of clause 1.2.2.2 which clarifies the requirement for Companies to assess the risks to ships, personnel and the environment arising from shipboard operations.

The ISM Code 'Objective' was that the SMS should:

- "establish Safeguards against all identified risks"

This is now revised to:

- "assess all identified risks to its ships, personnel and the environment and establish appropriate safeguards"

Small changes to the wording but important. It makes some form of risk assessment a mandatory building block of any Safety Management System (SMS).

This comes in force 1 July 2010 and this notice is to give information on what the Isle of Man Ship Registry requirements regarding these changes will entail.

### What does this mean in practice?

- Companies must first identify all the risks to their operation and then assess them. Then they must put in place suitable procedures to safeguard against these risks.
- When Companies first created their SMS this risk assessment would have been done when their procedures were first being created. However this was in most cases a mental process and written records of this initial assessment will normally not be available for review.

### **What do Companies need to do now?**

- There is no requirement for Companies to immediately re-risk assess all their existing procedures and operations. It may be taken as read that this exercise was completed when the SMS was first created and approved.
- At annual reviews of the SMS (Master & Company as required by ISM Code 5.1.5 & 12.2) Companies will have to start to collate auditable evidence that the Initial Risk Assessment conducted (when the SMS was created) is still valid and that all risks to its ships, personnel and the environment have been identified and assessed.
- Companies may well have to update their SMS Review Procedures to reflect this.
- If there are no records of the initial risk assessment, then these will need to be created as part of these reviews. Records may take many forms, including minutes of meetings, observation notes, hazard registers, risk matrices, etc..

### **What are the sorts of things that require to be risk assessed?**

- The new Risk Assessment requirement is a background, high level 'Objective'.
- There is no prescribed way to comply.
- One extreme would be to have a file of written Risk Assessments for each procedure within your SMS, however this may not suit every operator.
- This new requirement does not mandate Risk Assessment of every task on board (ie stripping down a pump or greasing a roller), although many Companies do go down this route.
- However as a minimum the general risks of, for instance collision, oil spill, fire, grounding, heavy weather, working aloft/overside, working on high voltage equipment, enclosed space entry etc , etc.. should be identified and assessed. The SMS procedures should then be reviewed bearing in mind these risk assessments to ensure that appropriate safeguards are in place, and continue to be effective.

### **Risk Assessment of non 'routine' tasks**

Most Companies have a Risk Assessment Procedure already. How to carry out a risk assessment should be included in the SMS for non routine tasks, and any significant findings recorded on board the ship.

### **Who should conduct the Risk Assessments?**

This is for the Company to decide, it can be anyone who has suitable training or experience to conduct risk assessments in accordance with Company requirements.

When conducting risk assessments, the guidance given in the "Code of Safe Working Practices for Merchant Seamen" issued by the UK MCA should be taken into account.

### **What will we be looking for at Company DOC audits 1 July 2010-1 July 2011?**

At Annual DOC Audits we will be confirming that the Company SMS reflects the requirement for the background risk assessment review to be incorporated within the annual reviews of the SMS (Master & Company as required by ISM Code 5.1.5 & 12.2).

During vessel audits we will be looking for evidence of any significant findings being recorded from risk assessment of non routine tasks.

### **What will we be looking for at Company DOC Audits after 1 July 2011?**

By this stage there should be records available from at least one 'Company Review' incorporating a review of the background risk assessments, which we will audit.

On board the vessels we will additionally be looking for evidence that the last Master's review has been conducted taking into account the background risk assessments.

Isle of Man Ship Registry

1 June 2010

*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.*