



**Department of Communications, Marine
And Natural Resources**

MARINE NOTICE No. 9 of 2003

**Notice to all Recreational Craft owners, Certifying Authorities,
Surveyors, Training Establishments, Masters and Crews of all
Recreational Craft.**

**APPLICATION OF SOLAS CHAPTER V TO
RECREATIONAL CRAFT.**

On 1 July 2002, some new regulations came into force, which directly affect recreational craft. These regulations are part of Chapter V of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, otherwise known as SOLAS V. Most of the SOLAS convention only applies to large commercial ships, but parts of Chapter V apply to small, privately owned recreational craft. The regulations described in this Marine Notice apply to recreational craft.

Voyage Planning

Regulation V/34 'Safe Navigation and avoidance of dangerous situations', is a new regulation. It concerns prior-planning for a boating trip, more commonly known as voyage or passage planning. Voyage planning is basically common sense. Recreational craft users should particularly take into account the following points when planning a boating trip:

- weather: before going boating, check the weather forecast and get regular updates if planning to be out for any length of time.
- tides: check the tidal predictions for the trip and ensure that they fit with the planned trip.
- limitations of the vessel: consider whether the boat is up to the proposed trip and that there is sufficient safety equipment and stores.
- crew: take into account the experience and physical ability of the crew. Crews suffering from cold, tiredness and seasickness won't be able to do their job properly and could even result in an overburdened skipper.
- navigational dangers: make sure the crew is familiar with any navigational dangers that may be encountered during the boating trip. This generally means checking an up to date chart and a current pilot book or almanac.
- contingency plan: always have a contingency plan should anything go wrong. Before departing, consider places where the boat can take

refuge should conditions deteriorate or if the crew suffer an incident or injury. Bear in mind that the GPS set is vulnerable and could fail at the most inconvenient time. It is sensible and good practice to make sure that the crew are not over-reliant on the GPS set and that they can navigate to safety without it should it fail.

- information ashore: make sure that someone ashore knows the plans for the trip and knows what to do should they become concerned for the crews' well being. The Irish Coast Guard has a Yacht and Boat safety scheme and all vessels planning to sail off-shore are encouraged to submit a Sail Plan before commencing the voyage. In addition, the Irish Coast Guard reminds all vessels that they should pass TR messages via their nearest Coast Radio Station. There is no charge for this service. Please note, however, that overdue reporting remains the responsibility of the vessels shore contact. The Irish Coast Guard will not initiate overdue procedures on the basis of TR messages.

Radar Reflectors

Many large ships rely on radar for navigation and for spotting other vessels in their vicinity. So, whatever size the boat is, it's important to make sure that it can be seen by radar. Regulation V/19 requires all small craft to fit a radar reflector 'if practicable'. If the boat is more than 15m in length, it should be possible to fit a radar reflector that meets the IMO requirements of 10m². If the boat is less than 15m in length, it should be fitted with the largest radar reflector possible. Regardless of the size of boat, the radar reflector should be fitted according to the manufacturer's instructions and as high as possible to maximise its effectiveness.

Life Saving Signals

Regulation V/29 requires the boat to have access to an illustrated table of the recognised life saving signals, so that it can communicate with the search and rescue services or other boats if it gets into trouble. A table of life saving signals is produced in the Annex to this Marine Notice and it can also be found in various nautical publications. If the boat is not suitable for carrying a copy of the table on board (because it's small or very exposed), make sure the table has been studied before going boating. Larger boats should keep a copy on board.

Assistance to other Craft

Regulations V/31, V/32 and V/33 require a vessel:

- to let the Irish Coast Guard and any other vessels in the vicinity know if it encounters anything that could cause a serious hazard to navigation, if that hazard has not already been reported. This can be done by calling the Coast Guard on VHF, if on board, or by telephoning them at the earliest opportunity. The Coast Guard will then warn other vessels in the area.
- to respond to any distress signal that it sees or hears and help anyone or any boat in distress as best it can.

Misuse of Distress Signals

Regulation V/35 prohibits misuse of any distress signals. These are critical to safety at sea and misusing them could put a person's life at risk.

In addition to SOLAS V, recreational craft users should note that the International Convention for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREGs) applies and therefore they should ensure that the correct lights and shapes are carried. The International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) also applies. Vessels should not discharge oil or drop garbage into the sea and vessels over 12m should display a placard. Vessels of 13.7 m in length are required to meet certain life saving and fire protection requirements.

Director General
Maritime Safety Directorate
Department of Communications, Marine
And Natural Resources
Dublin 2.

29 April 2003

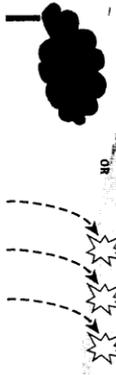
For any technical assistance in relation to this Marine Notice please contact the Marine Survey Office, 26-27 Eden Quay, Dublin 1 at 01-8744900.
For general enquiries please contact the Maritime Safety Division at 01-678 2360
Any enquiries concerning Marine Notices should be addressed to:
Maritime Safety Directorate, Leeson Lane, Dublin 2
Email: marine.notices@dcmnr.gov.ie

ANNEX

LIFE SAVING SIGNALS

To be used by Ships, Aircraft or Persons in Distress, when communicating with life-saving stations, maritime rescue centres and aircraft engaged in search and rescue operations.

Search and Rescue Unit Replies
You have been seen, assistance will be given as soon as possible.



Orange smoke flare.
OR
Three white star signals or three light and sound rockets fired at approximately 1 minute intervals.

Shore to Ship Signals
Safe to land here.



Vertical waving of both arms, white flag, light or flare.

Landing here is dangerous. Additional signals mean safer landing in direction indicated.



Horizontal waving of white flag, light or flare. Putting one flag, light or flare on ground and moving off with a second indicates direction of safer landing.

S: ... Morse code signal by light or sound.
R: ... Morse code signal by light or sound.
L: ... Morse code signal by light or sound.
Land to the right of your current heading.
Land to the left of your current heading.

Surface to Air Signals

Message	ICAO/IMO Visual Signals
Require assistance	V
Require medical assistance	X
No or negative	N
Yes or affirmative	Y
Proceeding in this direction	↑

Note: Use the International Code of Signal by means of lights or flags or by laying out the symbols on the deck or ground with items which have a high contrast to the background.

Air to Surface Replies
Message Understood.



Drop a message.

Message Not Understood – Repeat.



Straight and level flight.



Circling.



Morse code signal by light.

Air to Surface Direction Signals

Sequence of 3 manoeuvres meaning proceed to this direction.

1



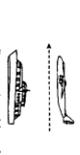
Circle vessel at least once.

2



Cross low, ahead a vessel rocking wings.

3



Overtake vessel and head in required direction.

Your assistance is no longer required.



Cross low, astern of vessel rocking wings.

Note: As a non preferred alternative to rocking wings, varying engine level or volume may be used.

Surface to Air Replies
Message Understood – I will comply.



Change course to required direction.

I am unable to comply.

OR

Morse code signal by light.

OR

Code & answering pendant "Close Up".

Morse code signal by light.

International flag "N".

Note: Use the signal most appropriate to prevailing conditions.