



G-B INTERNATIONAL

INTERNATIONAL SHIPS REGISTRY OF GUINEA-BISSAU

Technical Service Circular Nr. 01/ 2023, 19/01/2023 IMO Developments

Subject: “ Maritime Safety Committee (MSC 106) adopted mandatory International Code of Safety for Ships Carrying Industrial Personnel¹ (IP Code) ”

Summary: The IMO has adopted last November a new mandatory International Code of Safety for Ships Carrying Industrial Personnel (IP Code), anchored in a new SOLAS Chapter XV. The code enters into force on 1 July 2024 and enables cargo ships and high-speed cargo craft to transport and accommodate industrial personnel working offshore.

Background

1. As per current market trends the growing offshore renewable energy sector (e.g. wind farms) and offshore oil and gas installations have increased demand for ships that may combine transportation and accommodation of industrial personnel working offshore. Irrespective of the above, there are currently no international regulations for cargo ships carrying more than 12 personnel who are not engaged on board. Currently, ships carrying more than 12 persons, not engaged on board, would be considered passenger ships under the SOLAS Convention. The non-mandatory 2008 SPS Code (Code of Safety for Special Purpose Ships) has, however, frequently been accepted by various flag administrations for such vessels, instead of full passenger ship compliance, although the SPS Code is explicitly not intended to enable carrying persons not working on board.

Industrial Personnel Code Adoption by the IMO

2. The IMO has developed a new SOLAS Chapter XV and a related mandatory new IP Code for the carriage of more than 12 industrial personnel on cargo ships and high-speed cargo craft. The actual policy objective pursued is that the IP Code will intentionally fill and clarify the existing regulatory gap between SOLAS cargo ships and SOLAS passenger ships. The new SOLAS Chapter XV and the IP Code adopted by the MSC in November 2022, are entering into force on 1 July 2024.

3. The aim of the newly adopted Code is to provide minimum safety standards for ships that carry industrial personnel, as well as for the personnel themselves, and address specific risks of maritime operations within the offshore and energy sectors, such as personnel transfer operations. It is noted that such “personnel” may be engaged in the construction, maintenance, decommissioning, operation or servicing of offshore facilities, such as wind farms, as well as offshore oil and gas installations, aquaculture, ocean mining, or similar activities.

4. In particular the IP Code foresees that Industrial Personnel shall have basic knowledge of the ship (IP Code Reg. III/1.5) and shall have received training in safety procedures, personal survival, and the handling of the ship’s personal life-saving equipment (IP Code Reg. III/1.3).

Application of the IP Code to new and existing ships

5. All ships to which the IP Code applies shall have on board an “Industrial Personnel Safety Certificate”. The new IP Code will apply to new and existing ships from 1 July 2024 which:

- Are of 500 gross tonnage and above, and
- Operate on international voyages, and
- Carry more than a total of 12 industrial personnel, special personnel and passengers combined.

Page 1 of 2



Grandfather Clause Provisions

6. Grandfather provisions will allow existing ships, which have been carrying industrial personnel and authorized by the flag administration to do so, to obtain an Industrial Personnel Safety Certificate by complying with only parts of the IP Code, i.e. the provisions for training, safe personnel transfer, life-saving appliances and the carriage of dangerous goods. It is noted that for such ships the following deadlines apply:

- Cargo ships constructed before 1 July 2024 shall comply with the applicable requirements by the first intermediate or renewal survey, whichever occurs first, after 1 July 2024.
- High-speed cargo craft constructed before 1 July 2024 shall comply with the applicable requirements by the third periodical or first renewal survey, whichever occurs first, after 1 July 2024.

7. Of particular relevance is the fact that while the new IP Code is based on the 2008 SPS Code, it should be clarified that for existing ships already carrying more than 12 industrial personnel, flag administrations may permit the continued carriage of industrial personnel following other standards meeting an equivalent level of safety acceptable to the administration, as per Resolution MSC.418(97). In this respect, a decision from the flag administration is needed on a case-by-case basis.

8. Vessels that currently (and within 1 July 2024) do not operate with more than 12 industrial personnel, and which have no specific authorization from the flag administration to do so, will not be covered by the grandfathering provisions, and hence they have to be certified for the complete IP Code to obtain an Industrial Personnel Safety Certificate.

Guinea-Bissau International Ships Registry Recommendations

9. The G-B I.S.R. recommends early communication with our services throughout the implementation phase of the new code. It is noted that it is expected by the IMO to consider if guidance to clarify the interaction between the non-mandatory SPS Code and the mandatory IP Code is necessary. It is also strongly recommended to managing companies operating vessels registered with G-B I.S.R. to contact our administration for clarifying the starting of an operation with industrial personnel onboard. In addition, the G-B I.S.R. is recommending to shipowners operating vessels listed with the G-B ISR already carrying industrial personnel to contact our administration to obtain formal confirmation on whether their vessels are considered covered by the grandfathering provisions, or if any actions are required to obtain IP certification.

For the Guinea-Bissau International Ships Registry

Authorized Signatory:

Office of the General Ships Registrar



ⁱ Industrial personnel are persons who are transported or accommodated on board for the purpose of offshore industrial activities performed on board other ships and/ or offshore facilities