

Circular 153/2017

To: Deputy Registrars, Owners, Managers, DPA, Masters

Subject: Polar Code comes into force 1st January 2017

Date: 29th May 2017

Summary

On January 1st 2017 the **International Code for Ships Operating in Polar Waters (Polar Code)** entered into force. The code was developed by the International Maritime Organisation to provide for safe ship operations and the protection of the environment by addressing and identifying risks present in polar waters not adequately mitigated by other IMO instruments. The code covers both safety and pollution prevention measures.

Definitions

“SOLAS” is consolidated text of the International Convention for Safety of Lives at Sea, 1974 and it’s protocols of 1988: Articles, Annexes and Certificates.

“SOLAS ships” are passenger ships engaged on international voyages and cargo ships of 500 GT and upward engaged on international voyages

“NON-SOLAS ships” are:

- Ships engaged on domestic voyages, such as coasting cargo ships, domestic passenger ships, port services.
- Small cargo ships engaged on international voyage, such as small cargo ships, ocean tugs.
- Other small ships, such as fishing vessels and pleasure yachts.

References Documents

- The Polar Code (MSC Res.385(94))
- Resolution A-1024(26) Guidelines for ships operating in Polar Waters

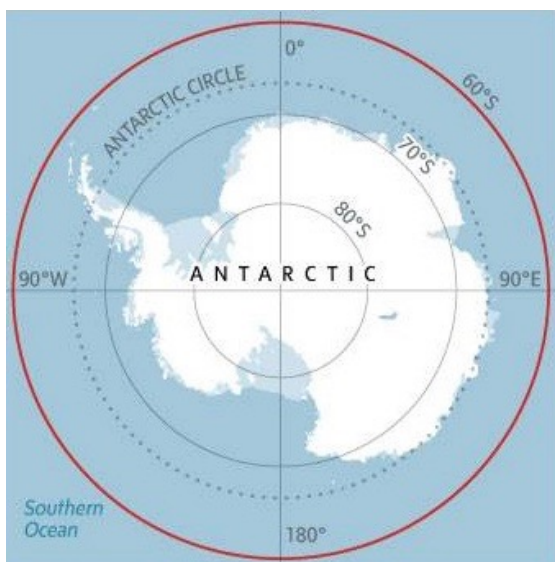
Who does it apply to?

The code applies to ships intending to operate in the Arctic and Antarctic areas as defined in the Polar Code.

Arctic: North of 60 degrees but limited by a line from Greenland: south at 58 degrees – north of Iceland, southern shore of Jan Mayen – Bjornoya – Kap Canin Nos.



Antarctic: South of 60 degrees.



The Cook Islands Maritime Administration requires that all ships flying the Cook Islands flag to which the Polar Code applies, operating in Polar Waters on or after **1st January 2017** must comply with the Polar Code. This includes:

- **Safety measures:** All ships certified under SOLAS, of 500 GT or more and all passenger ships operating in Polar waters constructed on or after 1st January 2017 must comply with part 1-A of the Polar code upon delivery. Ships constructed before 1st January 2017 (existing ships) must meet the part 1-A requirements by the first intermediate or renewal survey, which ever occurs first after 1st January 2018.
- **Pollution Prevention:** All SOLAS/NON-SOLAS ships (new and existing) operating in Polar waters must comply by 1st January 2017 with part II-A of the Polar Code in accordance with the relevant **MARPOL Annexes I,II,IV and V.**

Required Documentation:

A **Polar Ship certificate** will be issued by the Recognised Organisation (RO) after successful completion of an initial survey. The Polar ship certificate for the safety part has design, construction, equipment, operational, training, search and rescue requirements, ice, remoteness and severe and rapidly changing weather conditions. These are all to do with the potential hazards of operating in the polar region.

To obtain a **Polar Ship certificate** the manager of existing ships should submit the following to the Recognised Organisation:

- A report of the **Operational Assessment** identifying the hazards of intended operations listed in the code (Hazard Analysis).
- **Polar Water Operations Manual (PWOM)**. The PWOM must be developed by the ship owner or ship operator in accordance with Chapter 2 part 1-A of the Polar Code.
- Documentation of **Systems and Equipment** installed to comply with Polar Code so that it is fully functional at the established polar service temperature (PST) for the vessel.
- **Intact stability calculations** that include allowance for icing according to the Polar Code Regulation 4.3.
- **Drawings and designs** for existing ships are assumed approved or built to an ice class. Drawings and designs for new ships are to be submitted and approved. The specs and designs are to be carried out in accordance with Chapter 3 Part 1-A of the Polar Code.

Summary table for the Polar Code

Ship Date of Build	part I-A Safety Measures ⁴		part II-A Pollution Prevention Measures	Polar Ship Certificate Issuance		Training Requirements	Documentation Revisions
Before 01 January 2017	SOLAS Vessels	First intermediate or renewal SOLAS survey, whichever occurs first, after 01 January 2018	01 January 2017 MARPOL Annexes I, II, and V - All ships; MARPOL Annex IV - Ships on an International Voyage	SOLAS Vessels	First intermediate or renewal SOLAS survey, whichever occurs first, after 01 January 2018	STCW Basic and Advanced Training under Regulation V/4 01 July 2018 for ships with Polar Ship Certificate See Section 2.8 for detailed requirements	See IMO Circular MEPC.1/Circ. 856 , as amended, for guidance
On or After 01 January 2017	Upon delivery		Upon delivery	Upon delivery		01 July 2018	

The environmental requirements (MARPOL related) of the Polar Code:

- Environmental requirements of the Polar Code and are the responsibility of the Master.
- The environmental requirements are to be carried out in accordance to Part II-A and additional Part II-B of the Polar code. In these Parts mentioned of the code there are **Category A** ships, which mean a ship designed for operation in Polar Waters in at least medium first-year ice, which may include old ice inclusions, **Category B** ships, which mean a ship not included in Category A, designed for operation in Polar Waters in at least thin first-year ice, which may include old ice inclusions and **Category C** ships which mean a ship designed to operate in open water or in ice conditions less severe than those in Categories A and B.
- More definitions regarding operations in Polar Waters are outlined in the Introduction of the Polar Code.

Certification

When the submitted documentation has been verified and approved, the vessel will be surveyed and a **Polar Ship certificate** can be issued.

Manning and training will comply in accordance with Part I-A, Chapter 12 of the Polar Code. This chapter refers to Masters, Chief Mates and officers in charge of navigational watch on board ships operating in Polar Waters shall be qualified in accordance with the STCW Convention and STCW Code.

MARPOL Certificates at the next IOPP renewal survey the appendix to the IOPP certificate will be re-issued with a tick off mark for compliance with the environmental requirements of the Polar Code. The other MARPOL certificates are unaffected.

What steps to take next?

Please contact an approved Recognized Organisation (RO) to arrange your survey and certification for the Polar Code. [Click here](#) for approved list of RO's.

For further information or clarification please send your queries to
technical@maritimecookislands.com