БЪЛГАРСКИ КОРАБЕН РЕГИСТЪР
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BULGARIAN REGISTER OF SHIPPING

BRS CIRCULAR

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Date:	**10.08.2026**	**Revised IMO requirements for pilot transfer arrangements**
Substitutes	-	
Amendment to	-	
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Notice to: Ship Owners/ Managers/ Masters/ Operators/ Designers/ Surveyors/ Auditors

Introduction

Bulgarian Register of Shipping draws the attention of Shipowners, Managers, Masters, Operators and BRS Surveyors/Auditors to IMO Circular MSC.572(110), amended the SOLAS regulation V/23 related to pilot transfer arrangements. The main change is that the regulation mandates new associated performance standards, IMO Resolution MSC.576(110) - Performance Standards for Pilot Transfer Arrangements, whereas previous performance standards were recommended.

Application of requirements

As per IMO Resolution MSC.572(110) the performance standards for inspection, stowage, maintenance, replacement and familiarisation of pilot transfer arrangements apply as follows:

- For all pilot transfer arrangements, regardless of installation date: must comply with the introduction and parts D and E of the resolution from **1 January 2028.**
- Pilot transfer arrangements installed on or after 1 January 2028*: must comply with the new performance standards from **1 January 2028.**
- Pilot transfer arrangements installed before 1 January 2028* on SOLAS certified ships: must comply with parts A, B and C of the resolution not later than the first survey** on or after **1 January 2029.**
- Pilot transfer arrangements installed before 1 January 2028* on non-SOLAS certified ships: must comply with parts A, B and C of the resolution not later than **1 January 2030.**

***Note 1:** the expression "installed on or after 1 January 2028" means a contractual delivery date for the pilot transfer arrangement or, in the absence of a contractual delivery date, the actual delivery date of the arrangement to the ship on or after **1 January 2028.**

****Note 2:** the term “first survey” means the first annual survey, the first periodical survey or the first renewal survey, whichever is due first after the date specified in the relevant regulation or any other survey if the Administration deems it to be reasonable and practicable, taking into account the extent of repairs and alterations being undertaken. For a ship under construction, where the keel is laid before, but the ship is delivered after the date specified in the relevant regulation, the initial survey is the “first survey”.

Impact of changes

The SOLAS regulation V/23 pilot transfer requirements were last updated for new installations after July 2012. The latest mandatory performance standards, Res MSC.576(110), apply retroactively and include the 2012 changes to SOLAS Regulation V/23, as well as other new requirements. Consequently, vessels with pilot transfer arrangements installed before July 2012 may need more modifications than newer vessels to comply with the latest requirements.

Significant changes that impact existing ships

The following is a non-exhaustive list of the more significant changes in the revised requirements:

For installations on or after **1 July 2012:**

- All strong points on deck for pilot ladders, manropes and "means of securing a pilot ladder at intermediate lengths", are required to have a breaking strength of not less than 48kN. Strong points shall have breaking strength or equivalent safe working load limits clearly and permanently marked. Documentation of the conformance of the strong points, shackles and securing ropes shall be maintained on board and available for inspection purposes.
- At least one spare compliant pilot ladder and one spare set of compliant manropes shall be carried on board the ship.
- Pilot ladders and manropes, including their spares, shall be removed from service within 36 months after the date of manufacture or within 30 months after the date of being placed into service, whichever comes first.
- If a pilot ladder is to be stowed on a pilot ladder winch reel, the drum diameter shall be not less than 0.16m and the drum shall be provided with sunken securing points.
- Accommodations ladders used for pilot transfer, which are fitted with a trapdoor in the lower platform, have significant new requirements.
- Where rubbing bands or other constructional features prevent the safe approach of a pilot boat, these shall be cut back to provide at least 6m of unobstructed ship's side.
- New installations of pilot ladders, including the "means of securing the pilot ladder at intermediate lengths", and manropes shall be type-approved by the flag Administration (or a Recognised Organisation) in accordance with the performance standards.

For installations before **1 July 2012:**

- Accommodations ladders used for pilot transfer shall have sufficient length to ensure that their angle of slope does not exceed 45°.
- Means are to be provided to secure the lower platform of any accommodation ladder used for pilot transfer firmly to the ship's side.
- When a combination arrangement is used for pilot access, means are to be provided to secure the pilot ladder and manropes to the ship's side at a point nominally 1.5m above the bottom platform of the accommodation ladder.

Safety certificates and records

IMO amendments have also added new sections relating to pilot transfer equipment in the following safety equipment-related records:

- Record of Equipment for Cargo Ship Safety (Form E or C)
- Record of Equipment for Passenger Ship Safety (Form P)
- Record of Equipment for the Special Purpose Ship Safety Certificate (Form SPS)

- Record of Equipment for High-Speed Craft Safety Certificate

This will necessitate them being reissued and updated after 1 January 2028. For details, see IMO resolutions **MSC.572(110), MSC.573(110), MSC.574(110)** and **MSC.577(110).**

What shipowners and managers should do now

Please review the new IMO amendments to SOLAS Regulation V/23 to ensure continued compliance of existing vessels. Kindly arrange for submission of plans for approval by BRS, detailing any necessary modifications, well ahead of the required compliance date on the first survey on or after **1 January 2029.**

For further information

The IMO has published **MSC.1/Circ.1428/Rev.1,** containing illustrations of arrangements which are compliant with the new performance standards.
For more technical queries related to this subject, please contact BRS.