

ABS REGULATORY NEWS

No.06/2023



UPDATE TO SHIPBORNE VHF RADIO PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Circular MSC.1/Circ.1460/Rev.4 was approved at the 107th session of the IMO's Maritime Safety Committee. This circular indicates that incompatibility may exist between VHF radiocommunication equipment installed on ships and on shore due to amendments in the Radio Regulations. Shipborne VHF installations are to be updated by the first radio survey after 01 January 2028.

SHIPBORNE VHF PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

According to the performance standards for shipborne VHF radio installations capable of communication and digital selective calling (resolution MSC.511(105)), VHF radiocommunication equipment should comply with the Radio Regulations. The ITU World Radiocommunication Conferences in 2012, 2015 and 2019 have made extensive changes to appendix 18 of the Radio Regulations. While these changes do not affect the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS), they do affect the use of frequencies used for VHF meteorological, broadcasts, port operations, Vessel Traffic Service (VTS), navigational and urgent marine information.

Most of the existing equipment may already be in compliance with these requirements. However, equipment that is unable to comply with the performance standards will need to be updated or replaced.

Appendix 18 of the Radio Regulations requires 4-digit channels, whereas previous editions required 2-digit channels. The table below details the new channel list.

Channel Designator	Transmitting Frequencies (MHz)		Port Operations & Ship Movement		Remark
	From Ship Stations	From Coast Stations	Single Frequency	Two Frequency	
1078	156.925	156.925	X		
2078		161.525	X		RX Only
1019	156.950	156.950	X		
2019		161.550	X		RX Only
1079	156.975	156.975	X		
2079		161.575	X		RX Only
1020	157.000	157.000	X		
2020		161.600	X		RX Only
1027	157.350	157.350	X		
1028	157.400	157.400	X		

KEY NOTES

- Shipborne VHF radiocommunication equipment should be updated by the first radio survey after 01 January 2028
- Installations may require software/firmware to be updated or replaced to meet the performance standards contained in appendix 18 of the Radio Regulations
- References:
MSC.1/Circ.1460/Rev.3
ITU Radio Regulations – Edition 2020

MANUFACTURER'S ADVICE

Manufacturers have advised the following for the makes and models listed below.

FURUNO

Equipment	Status/Action
FM-8500	Equipment is non-compliant and software updates are unavailable. Equipment is to be retrofitted with FM-8900S.
FM-8700	
FM-8800S/D	
FM-8900S	If software version is lower than ver.4.01, then the equipment will require a software upgrade. Equipment with software version ver.4.01 or higher is compliant and no software upgrade is required.

JRC

Equipment	Status/Action
JHS-31	Discontinued – Retrofit with suggested JHS-800S.
JHS-32A	
JHS-32B	
JHS-33A	
JHS-770S / JHS780D Up to S/N: BK28463	Requires software update.
JHS-770S / JHS780D From to S/N: BK28464	Complies – No further action necessary.
JHS-800S	

JHS-770s / JHS780D	Required Software Version
NTE-770S/780D – VHF Transformer	Serial Number BK28463 or before requires ver.2.01
NCM-1770 – VHF Controller	Serial Number BJ33106 or before requires ver.2.01
NCM-2000 – Channel Selector	Serial Number BP39800 or before requires ver.1.10

TOKYO KEIKI

Equipment	Status/Action
RSS201A	Does not support 4-digit channel display. Suggest replacement with TRV-2000.
RU224A	
TRV-1000	
TRV-2000	Complies with new channeling arrangements.

SURVEY AND CERTIFICATION

Approved GMDSS service suppliers will document compliance and provide guidance through the standard GMDSS check sheets when attending for the vessel's annual verifications associated with the first scheduled radio survey after 01 January 2028. Vessel management is encouraged to confirm actions needed to bring the vessel into compliance in a timely manner. The GMDSS check sheets will be referenced in a normal manner by the attending surveyor in order to complete the scheduled Periodic or Renewal Safety Radio Survey.

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