



Technical Circular

No.: 016/2025

Date: 21st April 2025

Subject: IMO Circular, MSC.1/Circ. 1460/ Rev.5 Reg. Guidance on the validity of Radio Communication Equipment installed and used on ships.

1. The ITU World Radio Communication Conferences in 2012, 2015 and 2019 made extensive changes to appendix 18 of the Radio Regulation (RR). While these changes do not affect the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS), they do affect the use of other frequencies used for VHF meteorological, navigational, and urgent marine information broadcasts, port operations and Vessel Traffic Service (VTS).
2. According to the Performance standards for shipborne VHF radio installations capable of voice communication and digital selective calling (Resolution MSC. 511 (105)), VHF radio communication equipment should comply with the Radio Regulations.
3. Further, IMO Circular, MSC.1/Circ. 1389 on 'Guidance on procedures for updating shipborne navigation and communication equipment' provides that application software and firmware of navigation and radio communication equipment be kept updated to meet changes in IMO and ITU regulatory requirements.
4. In this regard, the International Maritime Organization has issued circular MSC.1/Circ.1460 (Rev.5) on 'Guidance on the validity of radio communication equipment installed and used on ships' providing that:

“To ensure radiocommunication capability in the ship-to-ship, ship-to-shore and shore-to-ship directions, **all VHF radiocommunication equipment onboard ships** required by SOLAS regulations IV/7.1.1, 7.1.2 and 7.1.6, **including the duplicated equipment** in accordance with regulations IV/15.6 and 15.7, **should comply with the latest channel arrangements in appendix 18 of the RR, by the first radio survey scheduled on or after 1 January 2028, or earlier, as appropriate.**
5. Ship Owners and managers are advised to take note of above and accordingly liaise with the VHF radio communication equipment manufacturer to arrange for timely up gradation of the equipment on their ships.
6. Further, it is to be noted that many PSC authorities and Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) may change over to the new VHF frequency before 01 January 2028 for communicating with ships and other vessels within their regions.

7. Accordingly, to ensure proper communications with PSC authorities and/or communications with VTS, prior to any passage, the Radio Operator / Masters are advised to review radio channel / frequency requirements for the vessel's area of operation, ensuring the radio communication equipment has the required capability.
8. **This Technical Circular supersedes and revokes earlier Technical Circular No. 023/2023, dated 30 August 2023.**

Encl.:

1. MSC.1/Circ. 1460/Rev.5.

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MSC.1/Circ.1460/Rev.5
27 January 2025

**GUIDANCE ON THE VALIDITY OF RADIOCOMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT
INSTALLED AND USED ON SHIPS**

1 The Maritime Safety Committee, at its 109th session (2 to 6 December 2024), approved the guidance set out in the following paragraphs, taking into account concerns over the availability of VHF radiocommunication equipment compatible with the frequencies and channelling arrangements set out in appendix 18 of the ITU Radio Regulations (RR) – Edition 2020. This guidance recognizes that incompatibility may exist between VHF radiocommunication equipment installed on ships and on shore, and the revised frequencies and channelling arrangements in appendix 18 of the RR.

2 This circular replaces MSC.1/Circ.1460/Rev.4, which indicated the need for updating existing VHF radiocommunication equipment following the first radio survey after 1 January 2028.

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

4 The *Guidance on procedures for updating shipborne navigation and communication equipment* (MSC.1/Circ.1389) notes that updates to application software and firmware to meet changes in IMO and ITU regulatory requirements are needed.

5 To ensure radiocommunication capability in the ship-to-ship, ship-to-shore and shore-to-ship directions, all VHF radiocommunication equipment on board ships required by SOLAS regulations IV/7.1.1, 7.1.2 and 7.1.6, including the duplicated equipment in accordance with regulations IV/15.6 and 15.7, should comply with the latest channel arrangements in appendix 18 of the RR, by the first radio survey scheduled on or after 1 January 2028, or earlier, as appropriate.

6 Ships should be capable of transmitting and receiving VHF radiotelephony with the shore facilities in their area of operation, noting that some administrations may have already implemented the new available channels prior to 1 January 2028.

7 Member States are invited to bring this information to the attention of the appropriate national authorities and all other parties concerned.