



Circular

Rīgā

04 March 2026 Nr. 10.1-1/N-8

To Recognized Organizations and Other Interested Parties

*On Equivalentents and Exemptions
for Offshore High-Speed Craft*

1. Introduction

Pursuant to Chapter 12.¹ of Cabinet Regulation No. 49 of 29 January 2008 “Regulations Regarding Ship Safety” (hereinafter – the Regulations), high-speed craft not subject to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974 (SOLAS) shall comply with the requirements of the International Code of Safety for High-Speed Craft, 2000 (HSC Code), subject to the modifications expressly provided for in the Regulations.

Furthermore, pursuant to Chapter 12.² of the Regulations, high-speed cargo craft not subject to SOLAS and carrying industrial personnel shall additionally comply with the requirements of Regulation 2 of Chapter XV of SOLAS (except paragraph 4), as well as Part III (except paragraph 2.1.7) and Part V of the International Code of Safety for Ships Carrying Industrial Personnel (IP Code).

2. Application of the HSOSC in the Field of Equivalentents and Exemptions

Pursuant to paragraph 726.¹¹ of the Regulations, the Maritime Safety Inspectorate (hereinafter – the Inspectorate) of the State limited liability company “Maritime Administration of Latvia” (hereinafter – MAL) has been granted discretion to permit recognized organizations to apply equivalentents and exemptions in respect of high-speed craft.

Taking into account this discretion and recognizing **the High Speed Offshore Service Craft Code (HSOSC)**, approved by the Secretary of State of the United Kingdom and published on 9 February 2022, as an internationally recognized and practically established standard for the design, construction and operation of offshore high-speed craft, the Inspectorate hereby declares that it will, **in principle, accept** the equivalentents and exemptions provided for in Chapter 9 of the HSOSC in relation to Chapters 2–19 of the HSC Code for offshore high-speed craft.

For the purposes of this circular, HSOSC shall mean the High Speed Offshore Service Craft Code (HSOSC) in the version in force on the date of issuance of this circular.

For the purposes of this circular, **offshore high-speed craft** shall mean high-speed craft that meet the criteria set out in Section 3.1.1 of the HSOSC (insofar as they do not relate to the jurisdiction of the United Kingdom) and comply with the operational limitations set out in Sections 5.4 and 5.5 of the HSOSC.

When applying the equivalents and exemptions provided for in Chapter 9 of the HSOSC in relation to Chapters 2–19 of the HSC Code, the requirements of Chapter 12.¹ of the Regulations shall also be complied with. Where Chapter 12.¹ of the Regulations prescribes, in respect of the same provision of the HSC Code, a different equivalent or alternative requirement than that provided for in the HSOSC, the provisions of Chapter 12.¹ of the Regulations shall prevail.

3. Application of Additional HSOSC Requirements

The Inspectorate invites recognized organizations, in relation to offshore high-speed craft, to also apply the additional or enhanced safety requirements provided for in Chapter 9 of the HSOSC in conjunction with Chapters 2–19 of the HSC Code, insofar as the national legislation of the Republic of Latvia does not prescribe different or higher requirements or stricter limitations in the relevant field.

4. Interpretation of the HSOSC when Applied to Latvian-Flag Craft

When applying the HSOSC, references therein to the United Kingdom (“United Kingdom”, “UK”) shall, in the relevant context, be construed as references to the Republic of Latvia.

When applying the HSOSC, references therein to the United Kingdom Maritime and Coastguard Agency (“Maritime and Coastguard Agency”, “MCA”) shall, in the relevant context, be construed as references to the State limited liability company “Maritime Administration of Latvia”, its Maritime Safety Inspectorate, or a recognized organization duly authorized in accordance with the applicable laws and regulations.

5. Individual Authorization and Rights of the Inspectorate

Pursuant to paragraph 726.¹³ of the Regulations, the application of any equivalents and exemptions, including those referred to in this circular, shall in each individual case require **separate authorization** from the Inspectorate upon submission of an appropriate application.

The declaration contained in this circular regarding the general acceptance of the equivalents and exemptions provided for in Chapter 9 of the HSOSC **does not in itself imply** that the application of any specific equivalent or exemption will be authorized automatically.

If the Inspectorate determines that, in a specific case, taking into account the craft’s construction, operational characteristics or intended area of operation, the application of an equivalent or exemption may adversely affect safety, the Inspectorate reserves the right **to refuse** authorization of the respective equivalent or exemption.

6. References in the High-Speed Craft Safety Certificate

If the Inspectorate has authorized a craft to apply all equivalents and exemptions provided for in Chapter 9 of the HSOSC in relation to Chapters 2–19 of the HSC Code, it is recommended that the following note be included in the high-speed craft safety certificate:

“Equivalents and exemptions applied in accordance with Cabinet Regulation No. 49 of 29 January 2008 of the Republic of Latvia and Circular No. 10.1-1/N-8 of the Maritime Administration of Latvia of 04 March 2026 (available on the MAL website).”

If the Inspectorate has not authorized the application of certain equivalents or exemptions provided for in Chapter 9 of the HSOSC in relation to Chapters 2–19 of the HSC Code for a particular craft, clear references to the respective exceptions shall additionally be included in the safety certificate, for example:

“... except for the equivalents and exemptions provided for in Chapter 9 of the HSOSC in relation to Section [specific section] of the HSC Code.”

7. Reliance on the Safety Certificate

Port State competent authorities and other interested parties may rely on the fact that, where the high-speed craft safety certificate contains a reference to the Regulations and this circular without additional limitations, the Inspectorate has authorized the application of all equivalents and exemptions provided for in Chapter 9 of the HSOSC in relation to Chapters 2–19 of the HSC Code.

Where the safety certificate contains explicit references to equivalents or exemptions the application of which has not been authorized, it shall be deemed that the application of the remaining equivalents and exemptions provided for in Chapter 9 of the HSOSC in relation to Chapters 2–19 of the HSC Code has been authorized.

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