



SHIP SAFETY BULLETIN

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Subject: **Coming into force of the new Vessel Fire Safety Regulations**

Purpose

This bulletin provides general information to stakeholders about the *Vessel Fire Safety Regulations* (VFSR). The VFSR were registered on February 3 and will be published in Part II of the Canada Gazette on February 22, 2017. The VFSR (SOR/2017-14) are available online at: www.gazette.gc.ca/rp-pr/p2/index-eng.html

Scope

The Regulations apply to Canadian vessels that are of more than 15 gross tonnage and vessels of not more than 15 gross tonnage (GT) carrying more than 12 passengers.

The Regulations do not apply to pleasure crafts or fishing vessels, and to some other particular vessel types listed in the application sections.

Structure of the Regulations

The Regulations are structured into four parts:

Part 1 generally applies to vessels of 24 metres or more in length, with some exceptions for smaller vessels as noted in the application section.

This part implements the SOLAS Convention Chapter II-2, *Construction – Fire protection, fire detection and fire extinction*, including the *International Code for Fire Safety Systems* (FSS Code) and the *International Code for Application of Fire Test Procedures, 2010* (FTP Code) with certain Canadian modifications mainly to address vessels below 500 GT or operating closer to shore.

Keywords:

1. Fire Safety Regulations
2. Fire protection
3. Fire equipment

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Part 2 applies to:

- passenger vessels of 24 metres or more in length that carry no berthed passengers and fewer than 100 unberthed passengers, and are engaged on limited voyages;
- cargo vessels of 24 metres or more in length but of less than 500 GT.

This part sets simplified structural fire protection requirements for these lower risk vessels, as an alternative to the more extensive SOLAS requirements of Part 1. The requirements for active fire protection (e.g. equipment, systems and appliances and related procedures) of Part 1 apply to vessels that are subject to Part 2.

Part 3 generally applies to vessels that are of more than 15 GT but of less than 24 metres in length.

This Part includes requirements for both structural and active fire protection. The requirements reflect best industry practices and international standards for smaller vessels, including wooden or composite vessels.

Part 4 presents consequential amendments to and repeals of parts of, the current regulatory regime.

Background

The existing fire safety regulatory regime enforces the *Fire Detection and Extinguishing Equipment Regulations* and parts of the *Hull Construction Regulations*. Over the years, Transport Canada has published a number of alternative standards, such as:

- the *Equivalent Standards for Fire Protection of Passenger Ships* (TP 2237),
- the draft *Fire Protection, Detection and Extinguishing Equipment Regulations* (TP 4813), and
- parts of the *Standards for the Construction and Inspection of Small Passenger Vessels* (TP 11717).

The *VFSR* implement internationally recognized fire safety requirements as set out in the SOLAS Convention, including future amendments. They also include Canadian alternatives and supplements to address unique Canadian circumstances, such as the risk of freezing in low temperatures or smaller vessels that operate close to shore. Canada keeps such modifications to the international instruments to minimum.

Grandfathering

Grandfathering provisions allow vessels certified in Canada before the day the *VFSR* come in force, to continue to comply with the existing fire safety regulatory regime with the following limitations:

- for vessels subject to Part 1 or Part 2, the grandfathering provisions apply for only one year after the day on which the *VFSR* come in force, in respect to requirements for:
 - emergency escape breathing devices;
 - operational readiness (including training); and
 - maintenance.
- the grandfathering provisions do not apply to:
 - vessel parts, equipment and systems that undergo major repairs, alterations or modifications; and
 - vessels that change their intended service.

Main Repeals and Consequential Amendments (Part 4)

The *Vessel Fire Safety Regulations (VFSR)*:

- repeal:
 - the *Fire Detection and Extinguishing Equipment Regulations*; and
 - parts of the *Hull Construction Regulations* related to the structural fire protection, in particular Part III to VI, Part IX and Part X and some definitions and related requirements.
- include amendments to the *Marine Machinery Regulations*, which:
 - relate to fire control systems with associated equipment in a machinery spaces;
 - allow use of plastic pipes which meet requirements of the FTP Code and the IMO Resolution A.753 (18) despite requirements of Schedule IX of the MMR.

Note: The *VFSR* includes a number of amendments to other regulations, as well, the complete list of the consequential amendments and repeals in Part 4 of the *VFSR*.

Other superseded documents

The following documents will also be withdrawn:

- the *Structural fire protection standards: testing and approval procedures* (TP 439),
- the *Equivalent Standards for Fire Protection of Passenger Ships* (TP 2237),
- the draft *Fire Protection, Detection and Extinguishing Equipment Regulations* (TP 4813), and
- the *guide to Structural Fire Protection* (TP11469).

Modifications will be made to the following Publications:

- the *Standards for the Construction and Inspection of Small Passenger Vessels* (TP 11717): Chapter IV of TP 11717, section 19 & 20 will no longer be permitted for use on vessels first certified after the coming into force of the new regulations; and
- the Tier I Policy - *Acceptance of an Alternative Regulatory Regime for Inspection, Construction and Safety Equipment* and the *Canadian Supplement to the SOLAS Convention* (TP 15211): The fire safety requirements will be removed from the alternative regime for vessels first certified after the coming into force of the new regulations.

Drawing approval and Inspection

Under the *Canada Shipping Act, 2001* (CSA 2001), the new VFSR does not specify requirements for plans approval or inspections. TCMSS will publish a policy to establish the plan approval and inspection system under the authority of section 16 and 211 of the CSA 2001. The requirements will remain similar to the requirements under existing regulations with adjustments when needed.

We will base:

- The list of plans vessel owners must submit, on the requirements in the existing regulations and the SOLAS Convention Chapter II-2, as applicable.
- The requirements for VFSR Part 1 inspections, will be based on the IMO Harmonized System for Survey and Certification (HSSC) for SOLAS Convention Chapter II-2.

Part 2 and 3 requirements will be similar to the requirements in the existing regulations and standards for similar size of vessels, adjusted when needed for the new regulations.