

Mandatory Nautical Publications & Weekly Notice to Mariners – Electronic updates

SOLAS 1974, Reg. V/19.2.1.4 and V/27 require that all ships carry adequate and up-to-date charts and nautical publications. SOLAS Reg. V/2.2 defines further the authorisation of the nautical chart or nautical publication.

In this respect we have been inquired about the acceptance of electronic updates to nautical publications and weekly Notice to Mariners. A number of our neighbouring states have accepted electronic updates to such publications under certain conditions and under the provision of Reg. I/5 of the SOLAS Convention.

Hence, under the following conditions, the Faroese Maritime Authority accepts the use of mandatory Nautical Publications and Weekly Notice to Mariners in digital format:

- It is a condition that they have been issued officially by or on the authority of a Government, authorized Hydrographic Office or other relevant government institution;
- The nautical publications and weekly notice to mariners in digital format are always available to the Officer of the Watch (OOW). It shall be possible, without limitations, to read and work with the digital data from the bridge;
- The hardware method or system for the use of nautical publications and weekly notice to mariners in digital format shall be dedicated to the ship's nautical operational purposes;¹
- The hardware or system for the use of nautical publications and weekly notice to mariners in digital format shall be connected to a power supply regardless of the operational conditions;
- The nautical publications and weekly notice to mariners in digital format shall be saved or kept as an additional back-up by a method separated from the main user system so that they can be made available to the OOW within a short period of time;
- The nautical publications and weekly notice to mariners in digital format is protected against editing;
- The software is protected from computer viruses, etc.;
- The equipment and installation shall comply with the requirements of SOLAS regulation V/17 regarding electromagnetic compatibility. Furthermore, it shall be possible to display the data on a monitor without impairing the OOW's night vision. Moreover, MSC/Circ.1091 on Issues to be considered when introducing new technology on board ship, MSC/Circ.891 on Guidelines for the on board use and application of computers and MSC/Circ.982 on Guidelines on ergonomic criteria for bridge equipment and layout shall be taken into consideration.

Additionally, the following requirements shall be met with regard to updating of nautical publications and notice to mariners in digital form:

- Only updates issued officially by or on the authority of a Government, authorized Hydrographic Office, or other relevant government institution shall be used;
- It shall be possible on board to electronically receive data for the updating of notice to mariners in digital form at the same interval as presently provided by means of notice to mariners;
- Documentation for the receipt of digital information and the installation of such shall be available on board at any time, by an application storing, recording and reading the received issues, or by another method;²
- A procedure for the use of digital notice to mariners for updating nautical publications and charts shall be incorporated into the ship's International Safety Management (ISM) system.

¹ **Note:** Nautical operational purposes are widely understood as, for example, IMDG information, stability, ballasting, voyage planning, etc.

² Documentation for the receipt of updates for nautical publications could, for instance, be delivery notes.