

Circular 2011/003

Bridge Navigational Watch Alarm System (BNWAS)

Date: 27/1/2014

To whom it may concern,

1. Installation

SOLAS Chapter V, Reg. 19.2.2.3 requires that all ships of 150 gross tonnage and upwards and passenger ships irrespective of size shall, in addition to the requirements of SOLAS Chapter V, Reg. 19.2.1, be fitted with a bridge navigational watch alarm system (BNWAS).

The SOLAS requirements for BNWAS entered into force on 1 January, 2011 and were intended to apply to all vessels. However, an omission in the amendments to SOLAS meant the requirements technically did not apply to vessels constructed before 1 July, 2002. However, the Belgian Maritime Inspectorate has implemented the requirements for all vessels, regardless of build date as it was intended. This is in line with res. MSC.350(92).

The BNWAS requirements apply not only to ships constructed after 1 July 2002, but to all ships, and this as follows:

Ship Type	Size	New ships (construction – keel laying date)	Existing ships (not new ships)
Passenger ships	ALL	1 July 2011	Not later than the first survey on or after July 1, 2012
Others	3,000 GT and above	1 July 2011	Not later than the first survey on or after July 1, 2012
	500 GT and above but less than 3,000 GT	1 July 2011	Not later than the first survey on or after July 1, 2013
	150 GT and above but less than 500 GT	1 July 2011	Not later than the first survey on or after July 1, 2014

No dispensation or delay on installation will be allowed.

The first survey means the first annual survey, the first periodical survey or the first renewal survey whichever is due first after the date specified in the relevant regulation or any other survey if BMI deems it to be reasonable and practicable.

If the first survey is being carried out by the classification society, the classification society is to endorse the safety equipment certificate and has to confirm to BMI that the BNWAS is properly installed, fully operational and fully compliant with all applicable regulations. Upon received confirmation BMI will reissue an amended certificate if applicable.

2. Requirements

The BNWAS has to be in conformity with the performance standards adopted by the Maritime Safety Committee, according to SOLAS Chapter V, Reg. 18.2, as well as the requirements of Directive 96/98/EC¹ as amended. As a result all BNWAS need to conform fully with the performance standards for BNWAS as specified in Res. MSC.128(75)², in Res. A.694(17)³ and in Res. MSC.191(79)⁴.

BNWAS which are to be placed on board on or after 5 October 2012 will be required to be type-approved.

For BNWAS installed prior to 5 October 2012 which have no such type-approval, BMI accepts a declaration of the recognized classification society that the BNWAS is in conformity with the above-mentioned resolutions.

When a BNWAS was manufactured before 5 October 2012 in conformity with procedures for type-approval already in force, it may continue to be placed on the market and on board until 5 October 2014.

3. Connection to the (S)VDR

Res. A.861(20)⁵ requires all mandatory alarms on the bridge to be connected to the (S)VDR. As a result the BNWAS is to be connected to the (S)VDR unless it is proven to be reasonably impracticable. The latter is only allowed for the existing (S)VDR and/or BNWAS. When the (S)VDR and/or BNWAS is to be replaced or renewed, connection of the BNWAS to the (S)VDR is required.

The third audible alarm of the BNWAS as mentioned in Resolution MSC.128(75) should be recorded in the (S)VDR.



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¹ Directive 96/98/EC means Council Directive 96/98/EC of 20 December 1996 on marine equipment, also known as MED Directive. Conformity with Directive 96/98/EC is amongst others shown by a wheel mark as mark of conformity.

² Res. MSC.128(75) Performance standards for a bridge navigational watch alarm system (BNWAS).

³ Res. A.694(17) General requirements for shipborne radio equipment forming part of the global maritime distress and safety system (GMDSS) and for electronic navigational aids.

⁴ Res. MSC.191(79) performance standards for the presentation of navigation-related information on shipborne navigational displays.

⁵ Res. A.861(20) Performance standards for shipborne voyage data recorders (VDRs).