

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Also by P. Deseck	IV
Preface	XX
Preface to the 2007 edition	XXI
Acknowledgement	XXII
Introduction	1
General layout of the 1972 Regulations	3

PART A - GENERAL**Rule 1 — Application**

- 1.1 Application 5
- 1.2 Special Rules 6
- 1.3 Traffic Separation Schemes 7

Rule 2 — Responsibility

- 2.1 General 8
- 2.2 Good seamanship and special circumstances 8
- 2.3 Negligence in complying with the Rules 9
- 2.4 Precautions required by good seamanship 9
- 2.5 Departure from the Rules 13

Rule 3 — General definitions

- 3.1 General 15
- 3.2 Vessel 16
- 3.3 Power-driven vessel 16
- 3.4 Sailing vessel 17
- 3.5 Vessel engaged in fishing 17
- 3.6 Seaplane 17
- 3.7 Vessel not under command 17
- 3.8 Vessel restricted in her ability to manoeuvre 18
- 3.9 Vessels constrained by their draught 19
- 3.10 Underway 20
- 3.11 Length and breadth of a vessel 21
- 3.12 Vessels in sight of one another 21
- 3.14 WIG craft 21

PART B - STEERING AND SAILING RULES**Section I - Conduct of vessels in any conduct of visibility****Rule 4 — Application**

VI

Rule 5 — Look-out

- 5.1 General 23
- 5.2 A proper look-out 23
- 5.3 By all available means appropriate 50

Rule 6 — Safe speed

- 6.1 General 57
- 6.2 The state of visibility 58
- 6.3 The traffic density 59
- 6.4 The manoeuvrability of the vessel 59
- 6.5 Background lights 62
- 6.6 The state of wind, sea and current 62
- 6.7 The draught in relation to the available depth of water 62
- 6.8 The fog signal that is heard 68
- 6.9 For vessels with operational radar 68
 - 6.9.1 Characteristics, efficiency, limitations of radar equipment 71
 - 6.9.2 Range scale in use 72
 - 6.9.3 The sea state, weather conditions and other sources of interference 72
 - 6.9.4 Small vessels, ice and other floating objects 73
 - 6.9.5 The number, location and movement of vessels detected 74
 - 6.9.6 Assessment of visibility 7

Rule 7 — Risk of collision

- 7.1 General 85
- 7.2 All available means appropriate to the prevailing circumstances 86
- 7.3 Proper use of operational radar 96
 - 7.3.1 Appropriate choice of range scale 96
 - 7.3.2 Proper setting of the radar 97
 - 7.3.3 Choice of appropriate display 97
 - 7.3.4 Systematic plotting of observed echoes 98
 - 1. Anti collision system 98
 - 2. Collision avoidance system (CAS) 99
 - 7.3.5 Observing by an experienced officer 101
- 7.4 Scanty information 102
- 7.5 Change of compass bearing 102

Rule 8 — Action to avoid collision

- 8.1 Positive action, in ample time, observing good seamanship 106
- 8.2 Substantial alterations of course and/or speed to be readily apparent 106
- 8.3 Alteration of course alone 108
- 8.4 Passing one another at a safe distance 108
- 8.5 Slackening of speed 109
- 8.6 Not to impede the passage of another vessel 111

Rule 9 — Narrow channels

- 9.1 Narrow channel or fairway 113
- 9.2 Vessels of less than 20 metres and all sailing vessels 115
- 9.3 Fishing craft 116
- 9.4 Crossing a narrow channel or fairway 116
- 9.5 Overtaking in a narrow channel or fairway 117
- 9.6 Bends in a channel or fairway 119
- 9.7 Anchoring in a narrow channel 120

Rule 10 — Traffic separation schemes

- 10.1 General 122

General provisions on ships' routing

- 1. OBJECTIVES 125
- 2. DEFINITIONS 125
- 3. PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES 127
 - Procedures and functions of IMO 127
 - Responsibilities of Governments and recommended and compulsory practices 128
- 4. METHODS 131
 - 4.1 The separation of opposing streams of traffic by separation zones, or lines where zones are not possible 131
 - 4.2 The separation of opposing streams of traffic by natural obstructions and geographically defined objects 132
 - 4.3 The separation of through and local traffic by providing inshore traffic zones 132
 - 4.4 The sectorial division of adjacent traffic separation schemes at approaches to focal points 133
 - 4.5 The routing of traffic at focal points and route junctions where traffic separation schemes meet 133
- 5. PLANNING 138
- 6. DESIGN CRITERIA 139
 - General 140
 - Mandatory routing systems 141
 - Converging and junction areas 142
 - Deep-water routes 142
- 7. TEMPORARY ADJUSTMENTS AND SUSPENSIONS 142
 - Mandatory routing systems 145
- 8. USE OF ROUTING SYSTEMS 145
- 9. REPRESENTATION ON CHARTS 146

Guidelines on the carriage of nautical publications 150

- 1. General 150
- 2. Requirement to carry nautical publications 150
- 3. Charts 150
- 4. Publications 151

VIII

Statutory Instrument 1997 No. 1341 152

The Merchant Shipping (Mandatory Ships' Routeing) Regulations 1997 152

- Citation and commencement 153
- Interpretation 153
- Duty to comply with adopted mandatory ships' routeing 153
- Offences and penalties 153
- Application 155
- Procedure within a Traffic Lane 156
- Inshore Zones 156
- Anchoring within a Separation Zone 156
- Vessels not using a Scheme 156
- Fishing Vessels 156
- Sailing Vessels and Small Craft 157
- Vessels engaged in Safety of Navigation Operations 157
- Cable Laying Operations 157
- Precautionary Areas 157
- 10.2 Application 159
- 10.3 Vessels using a traffic separation scheme 159
- 10.4 Vessels crossing a traffic lane 160
 - 1. Slow power-driven vessel crossing a traffic lane with a strong current 161
 - 2. Sailing vessel crossing a traffic lane with a wind 90° to the lanes 162
- 10.5 Inshore traffic zones 164
- 10.6 Separation zones or lines 164
- 10.7 Terminations of separation schemes 164
- 10.8 Anchoring in a separation scheme 165
- 10.9 Vessels not using a separation scheme 165
- 10.10 Fishing vessels 165
- 10.11 Small craft and sailing vessels 165
- 10.12 Vessels restricted in their ability to manoeuvre 165

Navigation in the Dover Strait (MGN 128 (M + F) 166

- Introduction 167
- Mandatory reporting systems 167
 - Inshore Traffic Zones 167
 - Regulations for Prevention of Collisions - General 168
 - Crossing Traffic 169
 - Rules 10(b)(ii) and 10(b)(iii) 169

Section II - Conduct of vessels in sight of one another

Rule 11 - Application

Rule 12 - Sailing vessels

- 12.1 General 170
- 12.2 Point of sailing of the vessel 171
- 12.3 The windward and leeward side of the sailing vessel 171

- 12.4. The windward and leeward sailing vessel 172
 - 12.4.1 The port and starboard tack rule 172
 - 12.4.2 The windward and leeward rule 173
 - 12.4.3 The port tack rule for doubtful cases 173

Rule 13 - Overtaking

- 13.1 Rule 13 is exclusive 180
- 13.2 When is a vessel overtaking 182
- 13.3 When is a vessel more than 22.5 degrees abaft the beam of another vessel 180
- 13.4 Action to be taken by the overtaking vessel 184

Rule 14 - Head-on situation

- 14.1 Application and action to be taken 186
- 14.2 When are two vessels meeting on reciprocal or nearly reciprocal courses ? 187
- 14.3 In case of doubt 187

Rule 15 - Crossing situation

- 15.1 General 189
- 15.2 Crossing situation 189
- 15.3 Give-way vessel 189
- 15.4 Action by give-way vessel 190

Rule 16 - Action by give-way vessel

Rule 17 - Action by stand-on vessel

- 17.1 Application 193
- 17.2 The stand-on vessel may take action 194
- 17.3 The last moment action 196
- 17.4 Avoid altering course to port 197
- 17.5 Duty of the give-way vessel 198

Rule 18 - Responsibilities between vessels

- 18.1 General 200
- 18.2 Power-driven vessel 201
- 18.3 Sailing vessel 202
- 18.4 Vessel engaged in fishing 203
- 18.5 Vessels constrained by their draught 205
- 18.6 Seaplanes 205
- 18.7 WIG CRAFTS 205

X

Section III - Conduct of vessels in restricted visibility

Rule 19 - Conduct of vessels in restricted visibility

- 19.1 Application 206
 - 19.2 Safe speed 207
 - 19.3 Safety measures prescribed in Section I of Part B 208
 - 19.4 Detection by radar alone 208
 - 19.5 Fog signal apparently forward of the beam, when there is risk of collision 209
- Navigation in fog (MGN) (M+F) 211**

PART C - LIGHTS AND SHAPES

Rule 20 - Application

- 20.1 In all weather conditions 214
- 20.2 No other lights which may create confusion 214
- 20.3 By day 215
- 20.4 Shapes 215
- 20.5 Technical data 215

Rule 21 - Definitions

- 21.1 General 216
- 21.2 Masthead light 216
- 21.3 Sidelights 217
- 21.4 Sternlight 218
- 21.5 Towing light 218
- 21.6 All-round light 218
- 21.7 Flashing light 219

Rule 22 - Visibility of lights

Rule 23 - Power-driven vessels underway

- 23.1 Power-driven vessel 228
 - 23.1.1 A power-driven vessel underway shall exhibit 228
- 23.2 Power-driven vessel less than 20 metres in length 231
 - 23.2.1 Determination of the course of a vessel by means of her lights 233
- 23.3 Air-cushion vessel - Hovercraft 236
 - 23.3.1 An air-cushion vessel (Hovercraft), when underway without draught, shall exhibit: 237
- 23.4 Very small power-driven vessel 238
 - 23.4.1 Power-driven vessel of less than 12 metres in length 238
 - 23.4.2 Power-driven vessel of less than 7 metres in length; maximum speed of 7 knots 239

Rule 24 - Towing and pushing

- 24.1 General 242
- 24.2 Power-driven vessel engaged in towing, length of tow 200 metres or less 243
- 24.3 Power-driven vessel towing, tow more than 200 metres 246
- 24.4 Composite unit 250
- 24.5 A power-driven vessel when pushing ahead or towing alongside 251
- 24.6 Conspicuous vessel being towed, pushed or towed alongside 252
 - 24.6.1 A conspicuous vessel or object being towed shall exhibit: 252
 - 24.6.2 A vessel being pushed ahead but not being part of a composite unit shall exhibit: 253
 - 24.6.3 A vessel being towed alongside shall exhibit: 253
- 24.7 Inconspicuous vessel being towed 255
 - 24.7.1 An inconspicuous, partly submerged vessel or object, or a combination of such vessels or objects being towed, shall exhibit: 256
 - 24.7.1.1 *AT NIGHT*: 256
 - 24.7.1.1.1 *Less than 25 metres in breadth and 100 metres or less in length*: 256
 - 24.7.1.1.2 *25 metres or more in breadth and 100 metres or less in length*: 256
 - 24.7.1.1.3 *Less than 25 metres in breadth and more than 100 metres in length*: 257
 - 24.7.1.1.4 *25 metres or more in breadth and more than 100 metres in length*: 257
 - 24.7.1.2 *BY DAY* 258
 - 24.7.1.2.1 *Lengths of tow 200 metres or less*: 258
 - 24.7.1.2.2 *Lengths of tow more than 200 metres*: 258
- 24.8 Vessel being towed unable to exhibit the lights 259
- 24.9 Vessel towing not normally engaged in towing operations 259
- 24.10 General considerations 260

Rule 25 - Sailing vessels underway and vessels under oars

- 25.1 General 266
- 25.2 Sailing vessel of any size 267
- 25.3 Sailing vessel less than 20 metres in length 268
- 25.4 Sailing vessel with additional lights 269
- 25.5 Sailing vessels less than 7 metres in length or vessels under oars 271
- 25.6 A vessel under sail and propelled by machinery 272
- 25.7 General considerations 272
 - 25.7.1 Sailing vessel 272
 - 25.7.2 Optional all-round red and green lights 273
 - 25.7.3 Three-colour lantern 273
 - 25.7.4 Sailing vessels less than 7 metres in length 274

Rule 26 - Fishing vessels

- 26.1 Maritime fishing methods 277
 - 26.1.1 Species of fish 277

XII

26.1.2 Fishing methods 279

26.1.2.1 *TOWED OR DRAGGED GEAR* 279

26.1.2.2 *ENCIRCLING GEAR* 279

26.1.2.3 *STATIC GEAR* 279

26.1.2.4 *OTHER GEAR:* 280

I. Fishing Gear

26.2 General 280

26.3 Towed or dragged gear 281

26.3.1 Trawling 281

26.3.1.1 *OTTER TRAWL* 281

26.3.1.2 *THE VIGNERON-DAHL TRAWL* 284

26.3.1.3 *THE HERRING TRAWL* 285

26.3.1.3.1 *Setting and hauling the bottom trawl* 285

26.3.1.4 *BEAM TRAWLING* 288

26.3.1.4.1 *Beam trawling using otter trawls* 289

26.3.1.4.2 *Twin-rig trawling using beam trawls* 290

26.3.1.4.3 *Advantages and disadvantages of the beam trawl compared with the otter trawl* 292

26.3.1.5 *MID-WATER TRAWL OR FLOATING TRAWL* 292

26.3.1.6 *PAIR TRAWLING* 294

26.3.1.6.1 *Bottom pair trawling* 294

26.3.1.6.2 *Pair mid-water trawling* 295

26.3.2 Caution is required when meeting trawlers 296

26.3.3 Fishing grounds 296

26.4 Encircling gear (or surrounding gear) 297

26.4.1 The Danish Seine Net (or Seine Net) 297

26.4.1.1 *SETTING AND HAULING THE SEINE* 298

26.4.2 The Ring Net (or purse seine) 301

26.4.2.1 *SETTING AND HAULING THE PURSE SEINE* 301

26.5 Static gear 303

26.5.1 Drift Nets or Gillnets 303

26.5.1.1 *SHOOTING AND HAULING THE FLEET* 306

26.5.2 Long lines 307

26.5.2.1 *THE BOTTOM LONG LINE* 308

26.5.2.1.1 *Setting and hauling the bottom long line* 308

26.5.2.2 *THE SUB-SURFACE LONG LINE* 309

26.5.2.2.1 *Setting and hauling the sub-surface long line* 310

26.6 Other fishing gear 310

26.6.1 Trolling 310

II. Lights and shapers of fishing vessels

26.8 Vessels engaged in trawling 314

26.8.1 A trawler shall exhibit: 315

26.8.2 A vessel engaged in trawling of more than 50 metres in length 316

26.9 Vessels engaged in fishing other than trawling 318

- 26.9.1 Vessels engaged in fishing, other than trawling, with outlying gear extending 150 metres or less 320
- 26.9.2 Vessels engaged in fishing, other than trawling, with outlying gear extending more than 150 metres 323
- 26.10 Trawlers and vessels engaged in fishing, other than trawling, with outlying gear extending 150 metres or less. 324
- 26.11 Vessels engaged in fishing, other than trawling, with outlying gear extending 150 metres or more. 325
- 26.12 General considerations 326
 - 26.12.1 Vessel engaged in fishing 326
 - 26.12.2 Trawlers 326
 - 26.12.3 Compulsory masthead light 326
 - 26.12.4 Fishing vessels other than trawlers 327
 - 26.12.4.1 Fishing gear extending 150 metres or less 327
 - 26.12.4.2 Fishing gear extending more than 150 metres 327
 - 26.12.5 Making way or stopped 327
 - 26.12.6 Signals to attract attention 328
 - 26.12.7 Daymarks 328
 - 26.12.8 Vessels engaged in fishing when at anchor 329
 - 26.12.9 Vessels fishing in close proximity 329

Rule 27 - Vessels not under command or restricted in their ability to manoeuvre

- 27.1 General 331
- 27.2 Vessels not under command 332
 - 27.2.1 A vessel not under command shall exhibit: 334
 - 27.2.1.1 *AT NIGHT*: 334
 - 27.2.1.2 *BY DAY*: 334
- 27.3 Vessels restricted in their ability to manoeuvre (other than minesweepers) 336
 - 27.3.1 A vessel restricted in her ability to manoeuvre and underway shall exhibit: (For vessels engaged in minesweeping operations, see paragraph 27.7) 338
 - 27.3.1.1 *AT NIGHT*: 338
 - 27.3.1.2 *BY DAY*: 339
 - 27.3.2 A vessel restricted in her ability to manoeuvre, at anchor, shall exhibit: 340
 - 27.3.2.1 *AT NIGHT*: 340
 - 27.3.2.2 *BY DAY*: 341
- 27.4 Vessels towing and unable to deviate from their course 344
 - 27.4.1 A power-driven vessel towing and unable to deviate from her course shall exhibit: 345
 - 27.4.1.1 *AT NIGHT*: 345
 - 27.4.1.2 *BY DAY*: 345
- 27.5 Vessels restricted in their ability to manoeuvre, engaged in dredging or underwater operations, if there is an obstruction 346
 - 27.5.1.1 *AT NIGHT*: 348
 - 27.5.1.2 *BY DAY*: 348

Rule 31 - Seaplanes**ADDITIONAL LIGHTS AND SHAPES**

- A. Minelaying, Minehunting and Minesweeping operations 369
 - A.1 A vessel engaged in minehunting operations shall exhibit: 370
 - A.1.1 AT NIGHT: 370*
 - A.1.2 BY DAY: 370*
 - A.2 Small vessels or inflatable dinghies with divers at work shall exhibit: 370
- B. Identification light for submarines 372
 - B.1 A submarine underway on the surface may, in addition to the prescribed lights, exhibit: 373
- C. British Submarines 373
- D. Warships of more than 50 metres in length 374
- E. Aircraft-carriers 375
- F. Dracones 376
 - F.1 A power-driven vessel engaged in towing one or more dracones shall exhibit: 377
 - F.1.1 AT NIGHT: 377*
 - F.1.2 BY DAY: 377*
 - F.2 A dracone being towed by a power-driven vessel shall exhibit: 377
 - F.2.1 AT NIGHT: 377*
 - F.2.2 BY DAY: 378*

PART D - SOUND AND LIGHT SIGNALS**Rule 32 - Definitions****Rule 33 - Equipment for sound signals****Rule 34 - Manoeuvring and warning signals**

- 34.1 Vessels in sight of one another 383
- 34.2 Manoeuvring signals 383
- 34.3 Warning signals 383
- 34.4 Signals to indicate course alterations 384
- 34.5 Light signals 385
- 34.6 Overtaking signals 385
- 34.7 Warning signals 388
- 34.8 Sailing vessels 388

Rule 35 - Sound signals in restricted visibility

- 35.1 Restricted visibility 390
- 35.2 In or near an area of restricted visibility 390
- 35.3 Propagation of sound 390

XVI

- 35.4 Maximum intervals 391
- 35.5 Fog signals 391
 - 35.5.1 A power-driven vessel underway and making way through the water 391
 - 35.5.2 A power-driven vessel underway and not making way through the water 391
 - 35.5.3 A vessel not under command 392
 - A vessel restricted in her ability to manoeuvre 392
 - A vessel constrained by her draught 392
 - A sailing vessel 392
 - A vessel engaged in fishing 392
 - A vessel engaged in towing or pushing 392
 - 35.5.4 Vessel engaged in fishing and vessel restricted in her ability to manoeuvre at anchor 395
 - 35.5.5 The last vessel being towed if manned 395
 - 35.5.6 Vessels at anchor 395
 - 35.5.6.1 *Vessels of less than 100 metres in length* 395
 - 35.5.6.2 *Vessels of 100 metres or more in length* 396
 - 35.5.6.3 *Any vessel at anchor* 396
 - 35.5.7 Vessels aground 397
 - 35.5.7.1 *Vessels of less than 100 metres in length* 397
 - 35.5.7.2 *Vessels of 100 metres or more in length* 397
 - 35.5.7.3 *Any vessel aground* 397
 - 35.5.8 Vessel of 12 metres or more but less than 20 metres in length 398
 - 35.5.9 Vessel of less than 12 metres in length 398
 - 35.5.10 A pilot vessel engaged on pilotage duty 399

Rule 36 - Signals to attract attention

Rule 37 - Distress signals

PART E - EXEMPTIONS

Rule 38 - Exemptions

ANNEX I - Positioning and technical details of lights and shapes

- AI.1 Definition 412
- AI.2 Vertical positioning and spacing of lights 412
 - AI.2.1 Power-driven vessel of 20 metres or more in length (Annex I, Paragraph 2 (a)) 412
 - AI.2.2 Power-driven vessel, between 12 and 20 metres in length (Annex I, Paragraph 2(c)) 413
 - AI.2.3 Power-driven vessel of less than 12 metres in length (Annex I, Paragraph 2(d)) 413
 - AI.2.4 Red-white-red lights and three red lights (Annex I, Paragraph 2f (ii)) 413
 - AI.2.5 Sidelights (Annex I, Paragraph 2 (g)) 414
 - AI.2.6 Power-driven vessel of less than 20 metres in length with combined lantern (Annex I, Paragraph 2 (h)) 414
 - AI.2.7 Two or three lights in a vertical line (Annex I, Paragraph 2 (i)) 415

