STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

2026 No. 260

RETAINED EU LAW REFORM

MERCHANT SHIPPING

The Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour Convention and Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2026

Sift requirements satisfied	*10th February 2026*
Made - - - -	*16th March 2026*
Laid before Parliament	*19th March 2026*
Coming into force - -	*10th April 2026*

The Secretary of State, with the consent of the Treasury, makes these Regulations in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 85(1), (3)(a) and (f), and (5) and (7), 86(1)(a) to (d) and 302(1) of the Merchant Shipping Act 1995(**a**) and sections 14(1) and 20(1)(b) of the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Act 2023(**b**)("the 2023 Act").

The Secretary of State has consulted such persons in the United Kingdom as the Secretary of State considers will be affected by the exercise of powers in this instrument in accordance with section 86(4) of the Merchant Shipping Act 1995.

The Secretary of State is a relevant national authority for the purposes of section 14(1) of the 2023 Act(**c**).

The requirements of paragraph 6(2) of Schedule 5 to the 2023 Act (relating to the appropriate Parliamentary procedure for these Regulations) have been satisfied.

Citation, commencement and extent

1.—(1) These Regulations may be cited as the Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour Convention and Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2026 and come into force on the 22nd day after the day on which they are laid.

(2) These Regulations extend to England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

(**a**) 1995 c. 21. Sections 85 and 86 were amended by the Merchant Shipping and Maritime Security Act 1997 (c. 28), section 8. There are other amendments to section 85 not relevant to these Regulations.
(**b**) 2023 c. 28.
(**c**) The term "relevant national authority" is defined in section 21(1) of the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Act 2023.

Amendment of the Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour Convention) (Minimum Requirements for Seafarers etc.) Regulations 2014

2.—(1) The Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour Convention) (Minimum Requirements for Seafarers etc.) Regulations 2014(**a**) are amended as follows.

(2) In regulation 2(1) (interpretation), in the definition of "United Kingdom ship"—

(a) insert "or" at the end of sub-paragraph (a);

(b) omit sub-paragraph (b).

(3) In regulation 29 (crew accommodation requirements)—

(a) after paragraph (1) insert—

"(1A) In this regulation, "social connectivity" means connectivity to internet services for social communication and social engagement purposes.";

(b) after paragraph (2) insert—

"(2A) Subject to paragraph (2B) and regulation 32 (approvals to allow substantial equivalences), social connectivity facilities must be provided in all areas of the crew accommodation of a ship except storerooms.

(2B) The requirement in paragraph (2A) does not apply—

(a) in relation to a seafarer—

(i) who does not live and work on board the ship, or

(ii) who is not on board the ship;

(b) in relation to a ship—

(i) which starts and finishes a voyage on the same day, or

(ii) while it is operating within an area, or is transiting waters in an area, where availability of social connectivity services is absent, or ineffective, due to reasons beyond the control of the ship owner.";

(c) in paragraph (3), after "(2)" insert "or (2A)".

(4) In regulation 32(1) (approvals to allow substantial equivalences), after "set out in" insert "regulation 29(2A) and".

(5) In regulation 34 (provision of food and drinking water)—

(a) in paragraph (1)(a), for "value and variety" substitute "value, variety and balance,";

(b) in paragraph (2), for "all seafarers while they are on board" substitute "seafarers during the period of their engagement".

Amendments and revocations in relation to government ships

3. The statutory instruments set out under column 1 of the table in Schedule 1 are amended or revoked to the extent specified under column 2 of that table.

Amendment of the Merchant Shipping (Fees) Regulations 2018

4. The Merchant Shipping (Fees) Regulations 2018(**b**) are amended to the extent specified in Schedule 2.

(**a**) S.I. 2014/1613, to which there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations.

(**b**) S.I. 2018/1104; relevant amending instruments are S.I. 1996/2821, 1998/2411, 1999/1704, 2205, 2001/54, 2002/2125, 2135, 2004/1266, 2006/89, 2014/1614, 1616, 2015/21, 1692, 2016/1026, 2018/242, 667, 2025/1103.

We consent to the making of these Regulations

Stephen Morgan
Gen Kitchen
12th March 2026 Two of the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury

Signed by authority of the Secretary of State for Transport

Keir Mather
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State
16th March 2026 Department for Transport

SCHEDULES

SCHEDULE 1

Regulation 3

Amendments or revocations

The statutory instruments set out under column 1 of the table below are amended or revoked to the extent specified under column 2 of that table.

Column 1	Column 2
The Merchant Shipping and Fishing Vessels (Medical Stores) Regulations 1995(**a**)	(1) In regulation 1(3) (citation, commencement, revocation and interpretation), omit the definition of "Government ships". (2) In regulation 3 (application), omit "and Government ships,".
The Merchant Shipping (Minimum Standards of Safety Communications) Regulations 1997(**b**)	(1) In regulation 3(1) (application), omit sub-paragraph (ii). (2) In regulation 5(3) (duty to ensure safe communication), omit the words "or a Government ship,".
The Merchant Shipping (Dangerous Goods and Marine Pollutants) Regulations 1997(**c**)	The whole Regulations.
The Merchant Shipping and Fishing Vessels (Health and Safety at Work) Regulations 1997(**d**)	In regulation 2(2) (interpretation), in the definition of "United Kingdom ship", omit sub-paragraph (b).
The Merchant Shipping and Fishing Vessels (Health and Safety at Work) (Employment of Young Persons) Regulations 1998(**e**)	In regulation 2(2) (interpretation), in the definition of "United Kingdom ship", omit sub-paragraph (b).
The Merchant Shipping and Fishing Vessels (Manual Handling Operations) Regulations 1998(**f**)	In regulation 2(2) (interpretation), in the definition of "United Kingdom ship", omit sub-paragraph (b).
The Merchant Shipping and Fishing Vessels (Personal Protective Equipment) Regulations 1999(**g**)	In regulation 2(2) (interpretation), in the definition of "United Kingdom ship"— (a) insert "or" after sub-paragraph (a); (b) omit sub-paragraph (b) and the "or" after it.
The Merchant Shipping and Fishing Vessels (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 2001(**h**)	In regulation 2(1) (interpretation), in the definition of "United Kingdom ship"— (a) insert "or" after sub-paragraph (a); (b) omit sub-paragraph (b) and the "or" after it.

(**a**) S.I. 1995/1802, amended by S.I. 2018/1202; there are other amending instruments but none is relevant.
(**b**) S.I. 1997/529, amended by S.I. 1999/1704; there are other amending instruments but none is relevant.
(**c**) S.I. 1997/2367, amended by S.I. 2004/2110, 2011/2616, 2024/636.
(**d**) S.I. 1997/2962, to which there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations.
(**e**) S.I. 1998/2411, to which there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations.
(**f**) S.I. 1998/2857, to which there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations.
(**g**) S.I. 1999/2205.
(**h**) S.I. 2001/3444, to which there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations.

Column 1	Column 2
The Merchant Shipping and Fishing Vessels (Provision and Use of Work Equipment) Regulations 2006(**a**)	(1) In regulation 2(1) (interpretation)— (a) omit the definition of "Government ship"; (b) in the definition of "United Kingdom ship", omit sub-paragraph (b). (2) In regulation 4 (application), omit paragraph (3).
The Merchant Shipping and Fishing Vessels (Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment) Regulations 2006(**b**)	(1) In regulation 2(1) (interpretation)— (a) omit the definition of "Government ship"; (b) in the definition of "United Kingdom ship", omit sub-paragraph (b). (2) In regulation 4 (application)— (a) in paragraph (6), omit the words after "fishing vessel" to the end; (b) omit paragraph (7).
The Merchant Shipping and Fishing Vessels (Control of Noise at Work) Regulations 2007(**c**)	(1) In regulation 2(1) (interpretation)— (a) omit the definition of "Government ship"; (b) in the definition of "United Kingdom ship", omit sub-paragraph (b). (2) Regulations 19 (application of powers of inspectors in relation to Government ships) and regulation 21 (right of appeal and compensation) are omitted.
The Merchant Shipping and Fishing Vessels (Control of Vibration at Work) Regulations 2007(**d**)	(1) In regulation 2(1) (interpretation)— (a) omit the definition of "Government ship"; (b) in the definition of "United Kingdom ship", omit sub-paragraph (b). (2) Regulations 18 (application of powers of inspectors in relation to Government ships) and regulation 20 (right of appeal and compensation) are omitted.
The Merchant Shipping and Fishing Vessels (Health and Safety at Work) (Carcinogens and Mutagens) Regulations 2007(**e**)	(1) In regulation 2(1) (interpretation), in the definition of "United Kingdom ship"— (a) insert "or" after sub-paragraph (a); (b) omit sub-paragraph (b) and the "or" after it. (2) Regulations 22 (application of powers of inspectors in relation to Government ships) and regulation 24 (right of appeal and compensation) are omitted.
The Merchant Shipping and Fishing Vessels (Health and Safety at Work) (Biological Agents) Regulations 2010(**f**)	(1) In regulation 2(1) (interpretation)— (a) omit the definition of "Government ship"; (b) in the definition of "United Kingdom ship"— (i) insert "or" after sub-paragraph (a); (ii) omit sub-paragraph (b) and the "or" after it. (2) Regulations 27 (application of powers of inspectors in relation to Government ships) and regulation 29 (right of appeal and compensation) are omitted.
The Merchant Shipping and Fishing Vessels (Health and Safety at Work)	(1) In regulation 2(1) (interpretation)— (a) omit the definition of "Government ship";

(**a**) S.I. 2006/2183, to which there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations.
(**b**) S.I. 2006/2184, to which there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations.
(**c**) S.I. 2007/3075, to which there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations.
(**d**) S.I. 2007/3077, to which there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations.
(**e**) S.I. 2007/3100, to which there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations.
(**f**) S.I. 2010/323, to which there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations.

Column 1	Column 2
(Chemical Agents) Regulations 2010(**a**)	(b) in the definition of "United Kingdom ship"— (i) insert "or" after sub-paragraph (a); (ii) omit sub-paragraph (b) and the "or" after it. (2) Regulations 20 (application of powers of inspectors in relation to Government ships) and regulation 22 (right of appeal and compensation) are omitted.
The Merchant Shipping and Fishing Vessels (Health and Safety at Work) (Work at Height) Regulations 2010(**b**)	(1) In regulation 2(1) (interpretation)— (a) omit the definition of "Government ship"; (b) in the definition of "United Kingdom ship"— (i) insert "or" after sub-paragraph (a); (ii) omit sub-paragraph (b) and the "or" after it. (2) Regulations 22 (application of powers of inspectors in relation to Government ships) and regulation 24 (right of appeal and compensation) are omitted.
The Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour Convention) (Medical Certification) Regulations 2010(**c**)	(1) In regulation 2 (interpretation), in the definition of "United Kingdom ship"— (a) insert "or" after sub-paragraph (a); (b) omit sub-paragraph (b) and the "or" after it. (2) Regulation 19 (inspection of Government ships) is omitted.
The Merchant Shipping (Technical Requirements for Inland Waterway Vessels) Regulations 2010(**d**)	(1) In regulation 2(1) (interpretation), omit the definition of "Government ship". (2) In regulation 3(1) (application), omit the words ", including Government ships,".
The Merchant Shipping and Fishing Vessels (Health and Safety at Work) (Asbestos) Regulations 2010(**e**)	(1) In regulation 2(1) (interpretation)— (a) omit the definition of "Government ship"; (b) in the definition of "United Kingdom ship", omit sub-paragraph (b). (2) Regulations 26 (application of powers of inspectors in relation to Government ships) and regulation 28 (right of appeal and compensation) are omitted.
The Merchant Shipping and Fishing Vessels (Health and Safety at Work) (Artificial Optical Radiation) Regulations 2010(**f**)	(1) In regulation 2(1) (interpretation)— (a) omit the definition of "Government ship"; (b) in the definition of "United Kingdom ship"— (i) insert "or" after sub-paragraph (a); (ii) omit sub-paragraph (b). (2) Regulations 16 (application of powers of inspectors in relation to Government ships) and regulation 18 (right of appeal and compensation) are omitted.
The Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour Convention) (Survey and Certification) Regulations 2013(**g**)	In regulation 2(1) (interpretation), in the definition of "United Kingdom ship"— (a) insert "or" after sub-paragraph (a); (b) omit sub-paragraph (b) and the "or" after it.

(**a**) S.I. 2010/330, to which there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations.
(**b**) S.I. 2010/332, to which there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations.
(**c**) S.I. 2010/737, to which there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations.
(**d**) S.I. 2010/1075, to which there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations.
(**e**) S.I. 2010/2984, to which there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations.
(**f**) S.I. 2010/2987, to which there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations.
(**g**) S.I. 2013/1785, to which there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations.

Column 1	Column 2
The Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour Convention) (Recruitment and Placement) Regulations 2014(**a**)	In regulation 2(1) (interpretation and application), in the definition of "United Kingdom ship"— (a) insert "or" after sub-paragraph (a); (b) omit sub-paragraph (b) and the "or" after it.
The Merchant Shipping and Fishing Vessels (Health and Safety at Work) (Electromagnetic Fields) Regulations 2016(**b**)	(1) In regulation 2(1) (interpretation)— (a) omit the definition of "Government ship"; (b) in the definition of "United Kingdom ship"— (i) insert "or" after sub-paragraph (a); (ii) omit sub-paragraph (b) and the "or" after it. (2) Regulation 15 (application of powers of inspectors in relation to Government ships) is omitted.
The Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour Convention) (Hours of Work) Regulations 2018(**c**)	In regulation 2(1) (interpretation), in the definition of "United Kingdom ship"— (a) insert "or" after sub-paragraph (a); (b) omit sub-paragraph (b) and the "or" after it.

SCHEDULE 2

Regulation 4

Amendments to the Merchant Shipping (Fees) Regulations 2018

In the Merchant Shipping (Fees) Regulations 2018, Schedule 1 (fees under the Merchant Shipping Act 1995), Part 1 (surveys, inspections and applications for exemption), the table under paragraph 5 (fees for inspections, etc.) is amended in relation to the item referred to under column 1 of the table below to the extent specified under the corresponding entry under column 2 of that table.

Column 1	Column 2
Section A (crew), the entry for the Merchant Shipping and Fishing Vessels (Medical Stores) Regulations 1995.	In the third column, after "1996/2821" insert "2026/260".
Section A (crew), the Merchant Shipping (Minimum Standards of Safety Communications) Regulations 1997.	In the third column, after "2006/89" insert "2026/260".
Section A (crew), the Merchant Shipping and Fishing Vessels (Health and Safety at Work) Regulations 1997.	In the third column, after "2025/1195" insert "2026/260".
Section A (crew), the Merchant Shipping and Fishing Vessels (Health and Safety at Work) (Employment of Young Persons) Regulations 1998.	In the third column, after "2015/21" insert "2026/260".
Section A (crew), the Merchant Shipping and Fishing Vessels (Personal Protective Equipment) Regulations 1999.	In the third column, for "None" substitute "2026/260".
Section B (crew accommodation), the Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour Convention) (Minimum requirements for Seafarers etc.) Regulations 2014.	In the third column, after "2025/1195" insert "2026/260".

(**a**) S.I. 2014/1615, to which there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations.
(**b**) S.I. 2016/1026.
(**c**) S.I. 2018/58, to which there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations.

Column 1	Column 2
Section F (fishing vessel safety) the Merchant Shipping and Fishing Vessels (Manual Handling Operations) Regulations 1998.	In the third column, after “1999/2205” insert “2026/260”.
Section I (construction and equipment), the Merchant Shipping and Fishing Vessels (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 2001.	In the third column, after “2015/21” insert “2026/260”.
Section L (survey and certification), the Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour Convention) (Survey and Certification) Regulations 2013.	In the third column, after “2025/1195” insert “2026/260”.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Regulations)

These Regulations implement certain amendments of 6th June 2022 made to the Maritime Labour Convention 2006 by making amendments to the Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour Convention) (Minimum Requirements for Seafarers etc.) Regulations 2014 (S.I. 2014/1613) ("the 2014 Regulations").

Regulation 2 amends the 2014 Regulations to—

— disapply the application of those Regulations to government ships;

— require that, with certain exceptions, social connectivity (internet) facilities are provided in all areas of crew accommodation except ship storerooms;

— introduce a requirement that food provided to seafarers is balanced and to clarify that the duty to provide food and drinking water for seafarers only applies during the period of their engagement.

These Regulations also amend various other merchant shipping regulations, using powers in the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Act 2023, to disapply the application of those regulations to government ships. These amendments are made by regulation 3 and Schedule 1.

Regulation 4 and Schedule 2 amend the Merchant Shipping (Fees) Regulations 2018 (S.I. 2018/1104) to insert consequential amendments that are required in respect of relevant instruments included in that Schedule.

The Maritime Labour Convention may be downloaded from the website of the International Labour Organization at https://www.ilo.org/international-labour-standards/maritime-labour-convention-2006. Copies of the MLC may be obtained as a priced publication from www.tsoshop.co.uk, or by post from TSO Customer Services, 18 Central Avenue, St. Andrew's Business Park, Norwich NR7 0HR, telephone number: +44 (0) 333 202 5070.

A full impact assessment has not been produced for this instrument as no, or no significant, impact on the private or voluntary sector is foreseen.

An Explanatory Memorandum and a de minimis assessment have been prepared and are published alongside the instrument on www.legislation.gov.uk.

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