



REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS

Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries.
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MERCHANT SHIPPING NOTICE Ref: 3 of 2026

Title: Implementation of SOLAS Regulation II-1/3-13 – Lifting Appliances and Anchor Handling Winches on Board Mauritius-Flag Vessels

Notice to: **Ship Owners/Operators/Masters/Skippers/Ship's Agents/DPAs/Service Providers/Recognized Organizations**

The objective of this Merchant Shipping Notice is to inform all those concerned of the Implementation of SOLAS Regulation II-1/3-13 – Lifting Appliances and Anchor Handling Winches on Board Mauritius –Flag Vessels

1. Background

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) adopted SOLAS Regulation II-1/3-13 through Resolution MSC.532(107) and the associated guidelines in MSC.1/Circ.1662 and MSC.1/Circ.1663 to establish mandatory requirements for the design, construction, installation, testing, inspection, and maintenance of lifting appliances and anchor handling winches, with the aim of reducing the risk of accidents and structural failures. The new regulation came into force from 01 January 2026.

2. Purpose

This Merchant Shipping Notice is issued to provide guidance to vessel owners, operators and managers on the implementation and compliance of SOLAS Regulation

II-1/3-13, concerning lifting appliances and anchor handling winches, on board Mauritius flagged vessels.

3. Applicability

This Notice is applicable to:

- a) Lifting appliances used for cargo loading, transfer, or discharge, used for raising and lowering hold hatch covers or moveable bulkheads, used as engine-room cranes, used as stores cranes, used as hose handling cranes, used for launch and recovery of tender boats and similar applications, used as personnel handling cranes and anchor handling winches, and associated loose gears utilized with the lifting appliances and the anchor handling winches.
- b) SOLAS Reg. II-1/3-13 paragraphs 2.1, and 2.4 do not apply to lifting appliances which have a safe working load (SWL) below 1,000 kg. However, for all lifting appliances with a safe working load below 1,000 kg, shipowners and operators should assess their usage and associated risks and incorporate procedures for inspection and maintenance into the shipboard Safety Management System (SMS) and these lifting appliances shall be permanently marked and provided with documentary evidence for the SWL.
- c) This Notice does not apply to the following under the provisions of SOLAS Reg. II-1/3- 13:
 - i. Lifting appliances on MODUs.
 - ii. Lifting appliances used on offshore construction vessels, such as pipe/cable laying/repair or offshore installation vessels, including vessels for decommissioning work.
 - iii. Integrated mechanical equipment for opening and closing hold hatch covers.
 - iv. Life-saving launching appliances complying with the LSA Code.

4. Requirements:

The following are the clarification of the technical requirements given in the SOLAS regulation II-1/3-13 and the Guidelines presented in MSC.1/Circ. 1662 and MSC.1/Circ.1663.

A. Design, construction and installation

a) Lifting appliances installed on and after 1 January 2026 shall be:

- i. Designed, constructed and installed in accordance with the requirements of a Recognized Organization (RO) or standards acceptable to this Ministry which provide an equivalent level of safety (paragraph 3.1 of MSC.1/Circ.1663).
- ii. Load tested and thoroughly examined after installation and before being taken into use for the first time and after repairs, modifications or alterations of major character (paragraph 3.2.1.2 of MSC.1/Circ.1663);
- iii. Permanently marked based on Guidelines in MSC.1/Circ.1663 and provided with documentary evidence for the safe working load (SWL).

b) Anchor handling winches installed on and after 1 January 2026 shall be designed, constructed, installed and tested to the satisfaction of the vessel's RO based on the Guidelines in MSC.1/Circ.1662.

c) Lifting appliances and anchor handling winches installed before 1 January 2026 shall be tested and thoroughly examined, based on the Guidelines in MSC.1/Circ.1662 and MSC.1/Circ.1663, no later than the date of the first SAFCON renewal survey on or after 1 January 2026.

d) Other design aspects such as Speed control and handling, Tension control, Overload alarm and monitoring, Control stations, Spooling device, Emergency release, associated anchor handling equipment are to be complied with the Guidelines as detailed in 3.1 of MSC.1/Circ.1662

e) Loose gear utilized with lifting appliances to which SOLAS regulations II-1/3-13.2.1 and II-1/3-13.2.4 apply should be designed and manufactured in accordance with requirements acceptable to the vessel's RO.

f) The expression installed on or after 1 January 2026 means:

i. for ships the keel of which is laid or which is at a similar stage of construction on or after 1 January 2026, any installation date on the ship; or

ii. for ships other than those specified above point, including those constructed before 1 January 2009, a contractual delivery date for lifting appliance or anchor handling winches, or in the absence of a contractual delivery date, the actual delivery date of the lifting appliance or anchor handling winches to the ship on or after 1 January 2026.

B. Load testing and thorough examination of Lifting Appliance and Loose Gear:

a) Load testing.

i. Lifting appliances to which SOLAS regulation II-1/3-13.2.1 applies should be load tested by the Competent Person to the satisfaction of the vessel's RO after installation and before being taken into use for the first time and after repairs, modifications or alterations of a major character.

ii. Lifting appliances to which SOLAS regulation 3-13.2.4 applies should be load tested to the satisfaction of the vessel's RO no later than the date of the first SAFCON Renewal Survey on or after 1 January 2026 or after repairs, modifications or alterations of a major character.

iii. Repairs, modifications or alterations of a major character are those which:

- change the safe working load of the lifting appliance; or
- affect the strength, stability or service life of the lifting appliance; or • affect the primary load bearing structure of the lifting appliance;

or

- modify the functionality of the lifting appliance or any part thereof which may affect its strength or safety or structural integrity.

iv. Lifting appliances to which SOLAS regulations II-1/3-13.2.1 and 3-13.2.4 apply should be retested at least once in every five years.

v. For load testing of lifting appliances intended for use while the ship is in port or sheltered waters, the test load, as set out in table 1 of MSC.1/Circ.1663, should be established using the SWL. For lifting appliances intended for open-sea operations, the test loads should be to the satisfaction of the vessel's RO, taking into account the applicable dynamic loads.

vi. Where the safe working load of the lifting appliances is undocumented and design information is not available, e.g. for lifting appliances which are installed on board before 1 January 2026 and the manufacturer no longer exists, the test load should be carried out as per MSC.1/Circ.1663 and MSC.1/Circ.1696 on Unified Interpretation of SOLAS II-1/3- 13.2.4, based on a safe working load nominated by the company, to the satisfaction of the vessel's RO and the factual statement of the test and thorough examination of noncertified existing lifting appliances to be issued.

vii. All loose gear in use with lifting appliances to which SOLAS regulation II-1/3-13 applies should have documentary evidence of a proof test and be retested after repairs, modifications or alterations of a major character to the satisfaction of the vessel's RO.

viii. Where an item of loose gear is tested, minimum test loads should be to the satisfaction of the vessel's RO, based on table 2 of MSC.1/Circ.1663.

b. Thorough Examination:

i. Lifting appliances & Loose Gear should be subject to thorough examination by the Competent Person as per MSC.1/Circ.1663 to the satisfaction of the vessel's RO for Cargo or Passenger ships:

.1 upon completion of any load test or proof test; and

.2 annually.

ii. Where thorough examination does not form part of the renewal survey or annual survey, verification that thorough examination of lifting appliances has been conducted/completed should take place during the SAFCON renewal survey under SOLAS regulation I/7 or the annual survey under SOLAS regulation I/10, as applicable.

iii. If on completion of a thorough examination, the RO considers the lifting appliance to be unsafe for operation or not in compliance with the applicable requirements of the Administration, then that lifting appliance should be taken out of service until any deficiency is rectified to the satisfaction of the RO. The lifting appliance should be clearly marked "not to be used" and the status should be recorded in a register of lifting appliances. While out of service, the relevant actions for inoperative lifting appliances as outlined under MSC.1/Circ.1663.

c. Records of thorough examination and testing:

i. A record of thorough examination and load testing should be maintained in a register of lifting appliances and should be available on board.

ii. Load testing and thorough examination of lifting appliances may be documented in any convenient form, provided each entry contains the necessary information, is clearly legible and is authenticated by a Competent Person. The minimum information to be included in the Certificate of test and thorough examination, as set out in appendix 1 of MSC.1/Circ.1663, should be used.

iii. Records of proof test and thorough examination of loose gear may be documented in any convenient form, provided each entry contains the necessary information, is clearly legible and is authenticated by a Competent Person. The minimum information to be included in the Certificate of test and thorough examination of loose gear, as set out in appendix 2 of MSC.1/Circ.1663, should be used.

C. Testing and thorough examination of Anchor Handling Winches:

a. Testing

i. For anchor handling winches to which SOLAS regulation II-1/3-13.2.2 applies, a commissioning test should be carried out according to the manufacturer's instructions and the requirements of a classification society which is recognized as RO by the Govt. of Mauritius in accordance with SOLAS regulation XI-1/1, or with applicable national or international standards acceptable to Ministry and which provide an equivalent level of safety. The commissioning test should include minimum standard as detailed in 3.2.1 of MSC.1/Cir.1662.

ii. After repairs, modifications or alterations of a major character, anchor handling winches are to be tested in accordance with 3.2.1.1.1, 3.2.1.1.2 and 3.2.1.1.5. of MSC.1/Cir.1662. If the emergency release system is affected by these repairs, modifications or alterations of a major character, the anchor handling winches are to be additionally tested in accordance with 3.2.1.1.3 and 3.2.1.1.4 of MSC.1/Cir.1662.

iii. Repairs, modifications or alterations of a major character are those which:

- change the rated wire pull of the anchor handling winch;
- affect the strength, stability or service life of the anchor handling winch; • affect the primary load bearing structure of the anchor handling winch; or
- modify the functionality of the anchor handling winch or any part thereof which may affect its strength or safety or structural integrity.

iv. Anchor handling winches that are not designed for towing do not need to undergo the bollard pull test. Functional testing other than the static bollard pull test is still required

v. Anchor handling winches and associated equipment should be operationally tested annually and five-yearly according to the manufacturer's recommendation and the requirements or recommendations of the vessel's RO. The annual test should include function tests of all equipment. The RO should witness the five yearly test for passenger and cargo vessels respectively.

vi. All loose gear in use with anchor handling winches and associated equipment to which SOLAS regulation II-1/3-13 applies should have documentary evidence of a proof test and be retested after repairs, modifications or alterations of major character acceptable to the RO.

b. Thorough examination

i. Anchor handling winches and associated equipment should be subject to a thorough examination to the satisfaction of the vessel's RO as applicable during annual surveys required by SOLAS regulations I/7 for passenger ships and I/10 for cargo ships, before re-entering service after any structural repairs or modifications of major character and after load testing. ii. If on completion of a thorough examination, the RO considers the anchor handling winch and loose gears to be unsafe for operation or not in compliance with the applicable requirements of this Ministry, then that anchor handling winch should be taken out of service until any deficiency is rectified to the satisfaction of Competent Person and RO. The anchor handling winch and loose gears should be clearly marked "not to be used" and the status should be recorded as outlined in 4.3.5. While out of service, the relevant actions for inoperative anchor handling winches and loose gears as outlined under section 5 of MSC.1/Circ.1662 Guidelines should be followed.

c. Records of testing and thorough examination Records of thorough examination and testing may be documented in any convenient form, provided each entry includes the necessary information, is clearly legible and is authenticated by the Competent Person. The relevant classification society or equivalent forms for documenting the thorough examination and testing should be considered for use.

D. Maintenance, inspection and operational testing:

i. All lifting appliances and anchor handling winches, regardless of installation date, and all loose gear utilized with any lifting appliances and anchor handling winches, shall be operationally tested, thoroughly examined, inspected, operated and maintained, based on the Guidelines in MSC.1/Circ.1662 and MSC.1/Circ.1663.

ii. Maintenance, inspection, operational testing and their respective intervals should be in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations, industry standards and guidelines or classification society requirements and recommendations acceptable to this Ministry, considering factors such as the operational profile of the ship and the lifting appliance, anchor handling winch and loose gear (paragraphs 3.5.1.1 and 4.6.1 of MSC.1/Circ.1662 and paragraphs 3.5.1.1 and 4.6.1 of MSC.1/Circ.1663).

iii. Due regard should be given to marine environmental conditions when implementing the inspection and maintenance regime including permits to work and safe access, while paying particular attention to examples of items in the Guidelines in MSC.1/Circ.1662 (paragraph 3.5.1.4) and MSC.1/Circ.1663(paragraph 3.5.1.4).

iv. Damaged, broken, worn or corroded ropes, including their terminations, should be inspected by a designated responsible crew member and discarded according to manufacturers' recommendations, relevant industry and international standards (e.g. ISO 4309:2017 on Cranes – Wire Ropes – Care and maintenance, inspection and discard) or requirements of classification societies acceptable to this Ministry (paragraphs 3.5.1.5 of MSC.1/Circ. 1662 and MSC.1/Circ.1663).

v. Lifting appliances, anchor handling winches and associated loose gear found unsafe for operation after an inspection by the designated responsible crew member should be taken out of service and clearly marked 'not to be used' and status recorded in a register of lifting appliances

vi. A maintenance manual should be provided by the manufacturer. Where maintenance manuals for existing lifting appliances and anchor handling winches are not available from the manufacturer, these may be provided by competent third parties acceptable to the RO.

vii. The maintenance manual should, as a minimum, include the items for each lifting appliance and anchor handling winch, described in the Guidelines in MSC.1/Circ. 1662 (paragraph 3.5.2.2) and MSC.1/Circ/1663 (paragraph 3.5.2.2).

E. Operations:

- i. All lifting appliances, anchor handling winches and all loose gear utilized with any lifting appliances and anchor handling winches, regardless of date of installation, shall be operated in accordance with the operations manual and Guidelines in MSC.1/Circ.1662 and MSC.1/Circ.1663.
- ii. Personnel operating lifting appliances, anchor handling winches and their associated equipment should be qualified, familiarized with the equipment and be authorized by the master. They should understand their role during the operation, in particular the signals that may be required to commence, coordinate or stop the operation and should be equipped with appropriate personnel protective equipment for the task.
- iii. Operations should be planned, supervised and carried out so that any identified risks are minimized, any procedures and instructions should relate to the specific type of equipment and should be provided in the operations manual.
- iv. Due consideration should be given to any limiting conditions such as ship's motion/inclination, wind speeds including wind gusts, environmental conditions such as ice and snow accretion, limitations such as SWL, slew radius, maximum line pull, maximum brake holding capacity, etc. as applicable.
- v. Effective communication should be established between ship's personnel and shorebased personnel involved in the operation. Safe means of access to the equipment and work area should be established, including safe areas for all personnel involved in the operations.
- vi. Procedures and measures for safe operation should take account of applicable international instruments, such as the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 and best practices for occupational safety and health.
- vii. Lifting appliances and anchor handling winches should be restrained and stowed in order to avoid uncontrolled movement during sea voyages using arrangements as required by the manufacturer.

viii. An operations manual for lifting appliances should be provided by the manufacturer. Where operations manuals for existing lifting appliances and anchor handling winches are not available from the manufacturer, these may be provided by competent third parties acceptable to the RO. The operations manual should, as a minimum, include the following for each lifting appliance and anchor handling winch:

- design, operational and environmental limitations.
- compatible loose gear.
- safety instructions; and
- operating procedures, including special procedures, if any

F. Inoperative lifting appliances and anchor handling winches:

a. Except as provided in regulation I/11(c), while all reasonable steps shall be taken to maintain lifting appliances, anchor handling winches and loose gear to which this notice applies in working order, malfunctions of that equipment shall not be assumed as making the ship unseaworthy or as a reason for delaying the ship in ports, provided that action has been taken by the master to take the inoperative lifting appliance or anchor handling winch into account in planning and executing a safe voyage and necessary dispensation obtained from the administration if applicable.

b. Additionally, the following actions should be taken by the master to mitigate risks posed by inoperative lifting appliances:

- i. prevent operation of inoperative lifting appliances, anchor handling winches and associated loose gear and equipment.
- ii. prevent uncontrolled movement of inoperative lifting appliances, anchor handling winches and associated loose gear and equipment using appropriate restraining and preventing arrangements, if required.
- iii. store inoperative wires and loose gear separately from in-service wires and loose gear and mark it as being inoperative; and

iv. record the particulars of lifting appliances, anchor handling winches and associated loose gear and equipment that is inoperative in the register of ship's lifting appliances or other form, as applicable, until necessary repairs have been completed and it has been load tested or proof tested, as necessary, and thoroughly examined.

5. Demonstration of Compliance:

a. Before being put into use for the first time, lifting appliances and anchor handling winches installed on or after 1 January 2026 should be certified as compliant with SOLAS regulations II-1/3-13.2.1 and II-1/3-13.2.3 with the recommended scope for demonstration of compliance of lifting appliances comprising the following:

i. a plan appraisal of the lifting appliance and foundation connections.

ii. verification of materials; survey,

iii. testing and examination during fabrication.

iv. verification of component certificates including its loose gear.

v. and testing and thorough examination when installed on board.

b. Lifting appliances and anchor handling winch installed before 1 January 2026 should be certified as compliant with SOLAS regulation II-1/3-13.2.4 no later than the date of the first SAFCON renewal survey on or after 1 January 2026.

c. All certified lifting appliances on board a ship should be recorded in the Register of Ship's Lifting Appliances and Cargo Handling Gear, as set out in appendix 3 of MSC.1/Circ 1663. with the Certificate of test and thorough examination.

d. A rigging plan and block list showing the correct reeving and rigging arrangements for the lifting appliance and the associated loose gear positions is to be kept on board, if applicable.

e. Demonstration of compliance of anchor handling winch should be recorded in convenient form authenticated by Competent Person

6. Miscellaneous:

- a. Existing lifting appliances and anchor handling winches installed before 1 January 2026 with valid certificates of test and thorough examination under another International/National instrument (e.g. the Convention concerning the Occupational Safety and Health in Dock Work (No. 152), 1979, adopted by International Labour Conference and issued prior to the entry into force of SOLAS regulation II-1/3- 13 will be accepted by the this office till the date of the first SAFCON renewal survey on or after 1 January 2026.
- b. The Load Test and thorough examination of lifting appliances and anchor handling winches referred to in this notice shall be carried out by the Competent Person based on the Guidelines in MSC.1/Circ.1662 and MSC.1/Circ.1663 to the satisfaction of the vessel's RO.
- c. The Competent Person may be a person/s trained by the OEM or persons of Service stations duly approved by the RO after assessing their capabilities, competence and available equipment and infrastructure as per the rules of the Classification Society.

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