

Changes to Legislation: as of 9 April 2026, there are changes to this Act which have not been implemented by the Revised Acts editorial team, see highlighted entries [here](#). Note that some amendments may not be in force until commenced by a commencement order or other provision.



Number 29 of 1952

MERCHANT SHIPPING (SAFETY CONVENTION) ACT 1952

REVISED

Updated to 29 July 2025

This Revised Act is an administrative consolidation of the *Merchant Shipping (Safety Convention) Act 1952*. It is prepared by the Law Reform Commission in accordance with its function under the *Law Reform Commission Act 1975 (3/1975)* to keep the law under review and to undertake revision and consolidation of statute law.

All Acts up to and including the *Statute Law Revision Act 2025 (10/2025)*, enacted 23 July 2025, and all statutory instruments up to and including the *Merchant Shipping (Cargo Ship Safety Equipment Survey) Rules 2025 (S.I. No. 382 of 2025)*, made 29 July 2025, were considered in the preparation of this Revised Act.

Disclaimer: While every care has been taken in the preparation of this Revised Act, the Law Reform Commission can assume no responsibility for and give no guarantees, undertakings or warranties concerning the accuracy, completeness or up to date nature of the information provided and does not accept any liability whatsoever arising from any errors or omissions. Please notify any errors, omissions and comments by email to revisedacts@lawreform.ie.



Number 29 of 1952.

MERCHANT SHIPPING (SAFETY CONVENTION) ACT 1952

REVISED

Updated to 29 July 2025

ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS

PART I.

PRELIMINARY AND GENERAL.

Section

1. Short title and collective citation.
2. Commencement.
3. Interpretation and construction.
4. Countries to which Safety Convention applies.
5. Power of the Minister to prescribe fees.
6. Collection and disposal of fees.
7. Laying of orders, rules and regulations before Oireachtas.
8. Repeals.
9. Transitional provisions.

PART II.

SAFETY OF LIFE AT SEA.

Construction and Equipment.

10. Construction rules.
11. Rules for life-saving appliances. *(Repealed)*
12. Amendment of section 430 of Principal Act. *(Repealed)*
13. Amendment of Principal Act. *(Repealed)*
14. Amendment of section 9 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1906. *(Repealed)*
15. Radio rules.
16. Radio surveyors.
17. Survey of passenger steamers by radio surveyors.
18. Rules for direction-finders.
19. Further provisions as to radio navigational aids. *(Repealed)*

Certificates.

- 20. Issue for passengers steamers of safety certificates and exemption certificates.
- 21. Modification of safety certificates as respects life-saving appliances.
- 22. Issue for cargo ships of safety equipment certificates and exemption certificates.
- 23. Issue for cargo ships of radio certificates and exemption certificates.
- 24. Issue of general safety certificates, etc., on partial compliance with rules.
- 25. Notice of alterations and additional surveys.
- 26. Prohibition on proceedings to sea without appropriate certificates.
- 27. Miscellaneous provisions as to surveys and certificates.

Safety Convention Ships not Registered in the State.

- 28. Certificates of Convention ships not registered in the State.
- 29. Modified survey of passenger steamers holding Convention certificates.
- 30. Miscellaneous privileges of ships holding Convention certificates.
- 31. Further provisions as to the production of Convention certificates.

Miscellaneous Provisions for Furthering Safety of Life at Sea.

- 32. Information about ship's stability. *(Repealed)*
- 33. Openings in passenger steamers' hulls and watertight bulkheads.
- 34. Submersion of sub-division load lines. *(Repealed)*
- 35. Report of dangers to navigation.
- 36. Signals of distress.
- 37. Obligation to assist vessels, etc., in distress.
- 38. Carriage of dangerous goods.
- 39. Carriage of grain.
- 40. Method of giving helm orders.
- 41. Careful navigation near ice.
- 42. Notice of Atlantic routes.

Supplemental.

- 43. Definition of "passenger " and "passenger steamer ".
- 44. Removing persons in case of danger.
- 45. Power of Minister to exempt from safety requirements.
- 46. Exemption of certain ships from certain provisions of this Act.
- 47. Consequential amendments of Merchant Shipping Acts.

[No. 29.]

*Merchant Shipping (Safety
Convention) Act 1952*

[1952.]

FIRST SCHEDULE.

ENACTMENTS REPEALED.

SECOND SCHEDULE.

TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS.

ACTS REFERRED TO

Merchant Shipping (Safety and Load Line Conventions)
Act, 1933

No. 42 of 1933

Wireless Telegraphy Act, 1926

No. 45 of 1926



Number 29 of 1952.

MERCHANT SHIPPING (SAFETY CONVENTION) ACT 1952

REVISED

Updated to 29 July 2025

AN ACT TO ENABLE EFFECT TO BE GIVEN TO AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION FOR THE SAFETY OF LIFE AT SEA, SIGNED IN LONDON ON THE 10TH DAY OF JUNE, 1948; TO AMEND THE PROVISIONS OF THE MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS, 1894 TO 1947, RELATING TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF PASSENGER STEAMERS, TO LIFE-SAVING APPLIANCES, WIRELESS AND RADIO NAVIGATIONAL AIDS AND TO OTHER MATTERS AFFECTED BY THE SAID CONVENTION; AND TO MAKE PROVISION FOR THE CHARGING OF FEES. [17th December, 1952.]

BE IT ENACTED BY THE OIREACTHAS AS FOLLOWS:—

PART I.

PRELIMINARY AND GENERAL.

Short title and
collective
citation.

1. — (1) This Act may be cited as the Merchant Shipping (Safety Convention) Act, 1952.

(2) The Merchant Shipping Acts, 1894 to 1947, and this Act may be cited together as the Merchant Shipping Acts, 1894 to 1952.

Commencement.

2. — This Act shall come into operation on such day as the Government shall by order appoint.

Interpretation
and construction
accepted Safety
Convention
certificate.

3. — (1) In this Act—

“ accepted Safety Convention certificate ” has the meaning assigned to it by [section 28](#) of this Act;

“ the Act of 1933 ” means the [Merchant Shipping \(Safety and Load Line Conventions\) Act, 1933](#) (No. 42 of 1933);

“ collision regulations ” means regulations made under Section 418 of the Principal Act;

“ construction rules ” means rules made under [section 10](#) of this Act;

“ country to which the Safety Convention applies ” means—

(a) a country the government of which has been declared under [section 4](#) of this Act to have accepted the Safety Convention, and has not been so declared to have denounced that Convention;

(b) a territory to which it has been so declared that the Safety Convention extends, not being a territory to which it has been so declared that that Convention has ceased to extend;

“ declaration of survey ” means a declaration made under section 272 of the Principal Act;

“ international voyage ” means a voyage from a port in one country to a port in another country, either of those countries being a country to which the Safety Convention applies, and “ short international voyage ” means an international voyage—

(a) in the course of which a ship is not more than two hundred nautical miles from a port or place in which the passengers and crew could be placed in safety and

(b) which does not exceed six hundred nautical miles in length between the last port of call in the country in which the voyage begins and the final port of destination, but, for the purpose of the definitions contained in this paragraph—

(i) no account shall be taken of any deviation by a ship from her intended voyage due solely to stress of weather or any other circumstance that neither the master nor the owner nor the charterer (if any) of the ship could have prevented or forestalled; and

(ii) every colony, overseas territory, protectorate or other territory for whose international relations a government that has accepted the Safety Convention is responsible, or for which the United Nations are the administering authority, shall be deemed to be a separate country;

F1[...]

F2[“ Irish ship ” means a ship, other than a ship of war, known as such under section 9 of the Mercantile Marine Act 1955;

“ master ”, in relation to a ship, means the person having, for the time being, the command or charge of the ship;

“ Merchant Shipping Acts ” means Merchant Shipping Acts 1894 to 2010;

“ Minister ” means Minister for Transport;

“ navigation and tracking rules ” means rules made under section 18

“ owner ”, in relation to a ship, means the person registered in the State, as its owner or, if no person is so registered, the person who owns the ship, and includes any part owner, charterer, manager or operator of the ship]

“ the Principal Act ” means the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894;

“ radio navigational aid ” means radio apparatus on board a ship being apparatus designed for the purpose of determining the position or direction of ships or other objects;

“ radio rules ” means rules made under [section 15](#) of this Act;

F3[...]

“ rules for live-saving appliances ” means rules made under section 427 of the Principal Act as amended by [section 11](#) of this Act;

F4["Safety Convention" means the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea signed in London on behalf of the Government on 1 November 1974, together with the Protocol to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea signed in London on behalf of the Government on 17 February 1978 and the Protocol to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea signed in London on behalf of the Government on 11 November 1988 and any amendments made to it up to and including those adopted by the 106th session of the Maritime Safety Committee of the International Maritime Organisation held between 2 and 11 November 2022 and which have entered into force in respect of the State pursuant to Article VIII of the Convention prior to the enactment of the Merchant Shipping (Investigation of Marine Accidents) Act 2025;]

" Safety Convention ship " means a ship registered in a country to which the Safety Convention applies and the expression " Safety Convention passenger steamer " shall be construed accordingly.

F5["surveyor of ships" means a person appointed under section 724 of the Principal Act to be a surveyor of ships for the purposes of that Act;]

(2) Except so far as the context otherwise requires, any reference in this Act to any other enactment shall be construed as a reference to that enactment as amended, extended or applied by or under any other enactment including this Act.

(3) Except so far as the context otherwise requires, this Act shall be construed as one with the Merchant Shipping Acts, 1894 to 1947, and, without prejudice to the generality of this provision, references in those Acts to the Merchant Shipping Acts shall be construed as including references to this Act.

(4) If any amendment of the Safety Convention comes into force, references in this Act to the Safety Convention shall, unless the context otherwise requires, be construed as references to the Safety Convention as amended.

Countries to which Safety Convention applies.

4. — The Minister, if satisfied—

(a) that the government of any country has accepted, or denounced, the Safety Convention; or

(b) that the Safety Convention extends, or has ceased to extend, to any territory, may by order make a declaration to that effect.

Power of the Minister to prescribe fees.

5. — (1) The Minister may, with the consent of the Minister for Finance, prescribe by order (in this Act referred to as a fees order) the fees to be charged for inspections made and certificates issued under this Act.

(2) The Minister may, with the consent of the Minister for Finance, at any time by order revoke or amend a fees order or an order made under this subsection.

Collection and disposal of fees.

6. — (1) All fees payable under a fees order shall be collected and taken in such manner as the Minister for Finance shall from time to time direct and shall be paid into or disposed of for the benefit of the Exchequer in accordance with the directions of the said Minister.

(2) The Public Offices Fees Act, 1879, shall not apply in respect of any fees payable under a fees order.

Laying of orders,
rules and
regulations
before
Oireachtas.

7. — Every order, rule and regulation made by the Minister by virtue of this Act shall be laid before each House of the Oireachtas as soon as may be after they are made and if a resolution is passed by either House within the next twenty-one days upon which that House has sat after such instrument has been laid before it annulling the instrument the instrument shall be annulled accordingly but without prejudice to the validity of anything previously done thereunder.

Repeals.

8. — The enactments mentioned in the **First Schedule** to this Act are hereby repealed to the extent specified in the third column of that Schedule.

Transitional
provisions.

9. — The provisions of the **Second Schedule** to this Act shall have effect for the purpose of the transition from the law in force before the commencement of this Act to the provisions of this Act.

PART II.

SAFETY OF LIFE AT SEA.

Construction and Equipment.

Construction
rules.

F7[10. — (1) The Minister may make rules ("construction rules") prescribing the—

- (a) requirements that the hull, superstructure, subdivision and stability, electrical installations, equipment and machinery of and fuel used in passenger steamers registered in the State, or other passenger steamers while in the territorial seas or elsewhere in the State, must comply with, and
- (b) requiring such steamers to be surveyed to such extent and in such manner and at such intervals, as may be prescribed.

(2) In making construction rules the Minister may categorise passenger steamers into different classes, where appropriate, having regard to one or more of the following:

- (a) the size, shape, speed or configuration of such steamers;
- (b) the service for which such steamers are to be employed;
- (c) the nature and duration of voyages to be undertaken;
- (d) the number of passengers or other persons, or both, that such steamers are designed to carry on board;
- (e) such other matter or matters that the Minister considers appropriate to take into account in the circumstances;
- (f) the type of cargo carried, including dangerous goods;
- (g) the age and date of construction of steamers.

(3) Different construction rules may be made in respect of different classes of passenger steamers and in relation to different classes of passenger steamers for different circumstances and for different areas of operation.

(4) Construction rules shall include such requirements as appear to the Minister to be necessary to implement the provisions of the Safety Convention prescribing the requirements that the hull, superstructure, subdivision and stability, electrical installations, equipment and machinery of and fuel used in passenger steamers must comply with, except so far as those provisions are implemented by rules for life-saving

appliances, radio rules, navigation and tracking rules, collision regulations or fire protection rules.

(5) Construction rules may require the provision in ships to which this section applies—

(a) of plans exhibited as provided by or under the rules, and of other information, relating to the boundaries of watertight compartments, the openings in them, the means of closing such openings and the arrangements for correcting any list due to flooding, and

(b) of information necessary for the guidance of the master in maintaining sufficient stability to enable the ship to withstand damage.

(6) Any survey carried out on a steamer to which this section applies in accordance with rules made under subsection (1)(b) is a survey for the purpose of sections 271(1) and 272 of the Principal Act.

(7) The powers conferred on the Minister by this section are in addition to the powers conferred by any other enactment enabling him or her to prescribe the requirements that passenger steamers must comply with.

(8) In this section, other than subsection (1)(b) "passenger steamer" includes a "passenger ship" within the meaning of section 2(1) of the Act of 1992.]

Rules for life-saving appliances.

11. — F8[...]

Amendment of section 430 of Principal Act.

12. — F9[...]

Amendment of Principal Act.

13. — F10[...]

Amendment of section 9 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1906.

14. — F11[...]

Radio rules.

F12[**15.** — (1) The Minister, after consultation with the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, may make rules ("radio rules") requiring—

(a) ships to which this section applies to be provided with a radio installation, other than a radio navigational aid, of such a nature as may be prescribed by the rules,

(b) to maintain such a radio service and to carry such number of persons, of such grades and possessing such qualifications, as may be prescribed, and

(c) such ships to be surveyed to such extent and in such manner and at such intervals, as may be prescribed.

(2) Radio rules may contain provisions for preventing so far as practicable electrical interference with the radio installation by other apparatus on board.

(3) Any survey carried out on a ship to which this section applies in accordance with rules made under subsection (1)(c) is a survey for the purposes of section 271(1) and 272 (as applied by section 27(2) of the Act of 1952 and section 3(4) of the Act of 1966) of the Principal Act.

(4) This section applies to all ships registered in the State and to other sea-going ships while they are within any port in the State.

(5) In making radio rules the Minister may categorise ships into different classes, where appropriate, having regard to one or more of the following:

- (a) the service for which such ships are to be employed;
- (b) the nature and duration of voyages to be undertaken;
- (c) the number of passengers or other persons, or both, that such ships are designed to carry on board;
- (d) such other matter or matters that the Minister considers appropriate to take into account in the circumstances.

(6) Different radio rules may be made in respect of different classes of ships and in relation to different classes of ships for different circumstances and different areas of operation.

(7) Radio rules shall include such requirements as appear to the Minister to be necessary to implement the provisions of the Safety Convention relating to radiocommunications.

(8) Radio rules may prescribe requirements for such portable radio apparatus as boats, survival craft or life-rafts may be required to carry by the rules for life-saving appliances.

(9) Without prejudice to the generality of the preceding provisions of this section, radio rules may—

- (a) prescribe the duties of radio personnel, including the duty of keeping a radio log-book;
- (b) apply to any radio log-book required to be kept under the rules any of the provisions of section 242 of the Principal Act (which provides for the delivery of the official log-book to the superintendent) and of section 256 of that Act (which provides among other things for the custody of the official log-book);
- (c) require the master of a ship to cause to be entered in the official log-book such particulars relating to the operation of the radio installation, and the maintenance of the radio service, as may be specified in the rules;
- (d) require the notification to the Minister of such details as the Minister may require in relation to radio installations.

(10) If the master of a ship fails to cause an entry to be made in the log-book of the ship in contravention of rules made under paragraph (c), or if any person contravenes any rules made under paragraph (a), of subsection (9), he or she commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding €1,000.

(11) If radio rules are contravened in any other respect in relation to any ship, the owner or master of the ship commits an offence and is liable—

- (a) on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding €5,000, or
- (b) on conviction on indictment, to a fine not exceeding €100,000.

(12) A surveyor of ships may board and inspect—

- (a) any ship, for the purpose of seeing that it is properly provided with a radio installation and radio personnel, and
- (b) any boat or life-raft on board the ship, for the purposes of seeing that it carries the required portable radio apparatus, in conformity with radio rules.

(13) If a surveyor of ships in making an inspection under subsection (12) finds that—

- (a) the ship is not provided with radio installation or personnel, or
- (b) a boat, survival craft or life-raft on board does not carry portable radio apparatus, in conformity with radio rules he or she shall give to the owner or master notice in writing pointing out the deficiency.

(14) A surveyor of ships may board and inspect any ship for the purposes of seeing that a deficiency has been remedied in accordance with a notice under subsection (13).

(15) A surveyor of ships may for the purposes of an inspection make such tests (either on the ship or ashore or at dock) ask such questions, inspect such documents or records and have access to such installation or other apparatus as he or she considers appropriate for that purpose.

(16) If a ship, in respect of which a notice has been given to its owner or master under subsection (13) which requires the deficiency to be remedied before the ship proceeds to sea, proceeds or attempts to proceed to sea without the deficiency being remedied as required in the notice, then the master or owner (as the case may be) commits an offence and is liable—

- (a) on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding €5,000, or
- (b) on conviction on indictment, to a fine not exceeding €100,000.]

Radio surveyors. **16.** — (1) A person appointed to be a surveyor of ships under section 724 of the Principal Act may be appointed as a radio surveyor.

(2) The functions of the Minister under the said section 724 with respect to surveyors of ships shall not be exercised with respect to radio surveyors except with the approval of the F13[Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources].

(3) Wireless telegraphy surveyors appointed under section 724 of the Principal Act as amended by section 8 of the Act of 1933 shall be radio surveyors.

Survey of
passenger
steamers by radio
surveyors.

17. — (1) The survey of a passenger steamer required by the Principal Act shall, in respect of a sea-going steamer which is not exempt from the obligations imposed by the radio rules, include a survey by a radio surveyor, and accordingly subsection (1) of section 272 of that Act shall be amended by inserting after the words “engineer surveyor of ships” the words “ and, in the case of a sea-going passenger steamer required to be provided with a F14[radiocommunications installation], by a radio surveyor ”.

(2) Section 275 of the Principal Act (which provides for appeals to a court of survey by persons aggrieved by the declaration of survey of a ship or engineer surveyor) shall be amended by inserting the words “ or radio surveyor ” after the words “engineer surveyor” in both places where they occur.

Rules for
direction-finders.

F16[**18.** — F17[(1) The Minister may make rules (“navigation and tracking rules”) prescribing requirements for—

- (a) navigation and tracking systems and equipment including the position, method of fitting and maintenance of such systems and equipment,
- (b) the survey of navigation and tracking systems and equipment for compliance with rules made under this section, including the extent, manner and intervals of such surveys, and
- (c) the inspection of navigation and tracking systems and equipment to ensure continued compliance with rules made under this section.]

(2) This section applies to all ships registered in the State and to other ships while they are within any port in the State.

(3) In making navigation and tracking rules the Minister may categorise ships into different classes, where appropriate, having regard to one or more of the following:

- (a) the size, shape, speed or configuration of such ships;
- (b) the service for which such ships are to be employed;
- (c) the nature and duration of voyages to be undertaken;
- (d) the number of passengers or other persons, or both, that such ships are designed to carry on board;
- (e) such other matter or matters that the Minister considers appropriate to take into account in the circumstances.

(4) Different rules may be made in respect of different classes of ships and in relation to different classes of ships for different circumstances and different areas of operation.

(5) Navigation and tracking rules shall include such requirements as appear to the Minister to be necessary to implement the provisions of the Safety Convention relating to navigation and tracking systems and equipment.

(6) Without prejudice to the generality of the preceding provisions of this section, navigation and tracking rules may require notification to the Minister of the identity, the position, the date and time, and other relevant details regarding a ship on which such systems and equipment are positioned.

(7) If navigation and tracking rules are contravened in any respect in relation to any ship, the owner or master of the ship commits an offence and is liable—

- (a) on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding €5,000, or
- (b) on conviction on indictment, to a fine not exceeding €100,000.

(8) A surveyor of ships may F17[board, survey and inspect]—

- (a) any ship, for the purpose of seeing that it is properly provided with the required systems, and
- (b) any boat, survival craft or life-raft on board the ship, for the purposes of seeing that it carries the required systems, in conformity with navigation and tracking rules.

(9) If a surveyor of ships in F17[carrying out a survey or inspection] under subsection (8) finds that the ship is not provided with navigation and tracking systems and equipment in conformity with the navigation and tracking rules, he or she shall give to the owner or master notice in writing pointing out the deficiency.

(10) A surveyor of ships may F17[board, survey and inspect] any ship for the purposes of seeing that a deficiency is remedied in accordance with a notice under subsection (9).

(11) A surveyor of ships may for the purposes of F17[a survey or inspection] make such tests (either on the ship or ashore or at dock), ask such questions, inspect such documents or records and have access to such systems or equipment as he or she considers appropriate for that purpose.

(12) If a ship, in respect of which a notice has been given to its owner or master under subsection (9), which requires the deficiency to be remedied before the ship proceeds to sea, proceeds or attempts to proceed to sea without the deficiency being

remedied as required in the notice, then the master or owner (as the case may be) commits an offence and is liable—

(a) on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding €5,000, or

(b) on conviction on indictment, to a fine not exceeding €100,000.]

Further provisions as to radio navigational aids.

19. — F18[...]

Certificates.

Issue for passenger steamers of safety certificates and exemption certificates.

20. — (1) If the Minister, on receipt of declarations of survey in respect of a passenger steamer registered in the State, is satisfied that the steamer complies with the construction rules, rules for life-saving appliances, F19[fire protection rules,] radio rules and F20[navigation and tracking rules] applicable to the steamer and to such international voyages as she is to be engaged on, and that she is properly provided with the lights, shapes and means of making fog-signals required by the collision regulations, he shall, on the application of the owner, issue in respect of the steamer a certificate (in this Act referred to as a general safety certificate) showing that the steamer complies with the requirements of the Safety Convention applicable as aforesaid.

(2) If the voyages on which the steamer is to be engaged are short international voyages and she complies only with such of those rules as are applicable to those voyages, the certificate shall show that the steamer complies with the requirements of the Safety Convention applicable to her as a steamer plying on short international voyages, and any such certificate is hereafter in this Act referred to as a short voyage safety certificate.

(3) If the Minister, on receipt of declarations of survey in respect of any such passenger steamer as aforesaid is satisfied that the steamer is exempt, by virtue of any exercise by him of a power in that behalf conferred on him by this Act or conferred on him by the rules in question, from any of the requirements of the construction rules, rules for life-saving appliances, radio rules or F21[navigation and tracking rules] applicable to the steamer and to such international voyages as she is to be engaged on, whether short voyages or otherwise, that she complies with the rest of those requirements and that she is properly provided with the lights, shapes and means of making fog-signals required by the collision regulations, he shall, on the application of the owner, issue in respect of the steamer—

(a) an exemption certificate stating which of the requirements of the Safety Convention applicable as aforesaid the steamer is exempt from and that the exemption is conditional on the steamer plying only on the voyages and being engaged only in the trades and complying with the other conditions (if any) specified in the certificate, and

(b) a certificate showing that the steamer complies with the rest of those requirements;

and any certificate issued under paragraph (b) of this subsection is hereafter in this Act referred to as a qualified safety certificate or a qualified short voyage safety certificate, as the case may be.

Modification of safety certificates as respects life-saving appliances.

21. — (1) If, on any international voyage, a passenger steamer registered in the State in respect of which a general safety certificate, a short voyage safety certificate, a qualified safety certificate or a qualified short voyage safety certificate is in force has on board a total number of persons less than the number stated in that certificate to be the number for which the life-saving appliances on the steamer provide, the Minister may, at the request of the master of the steamer, issue a memorandum stating the total number of persons carried on the steamer on that voyage, and the

consequent modifications which may be made for the purpose of that voyage in the particulars with respect to life-saving appliances stated in the certificate, and that memorandum shall be annexed to the certificate.

(2) Every such memorandum shall be returned to the Minister at the end of the voyage to which it relates and, if it is not so returned, the master of the steamer shall be guilty of an offence under this section and shall be liable on summary conviction thereof to a fine not exceeding F22[€500].

Issue for cargo
ships of safety
equipment
certificates and
exemption
certificates.

22. — (1) If the Minister, on receipt of declarations of survey in respect of a ship registered in the State, not being a passenger steamer, is satisfied that the ship complies with the rules for life-saving appliances applicable F23[and fire protection rules] to the ship F24[...] and that she is properly provided with the lights, shapes and means of making fog-signals required by the collision regulations, he shall, on the application of the owner, issue in respect of the ship a certificate (in this Act referred to as a safety equipment certificate) showing that the ship F25[complies with such requirements].

(2) If the Minister, on the receipt of declarations of survey in respect of any such ship as aforesaid, is satisfied that the ship is exempt, by virtue of any exercise by him of a power in that behalf conferred on him by this Act or conferred on him by the rules for life-saving appliances F23[and fire protection rules], from any of the requirements of those rules applicable to the ship F24[...], and that she complies with the rest of those requirements and is properly provided with the lights, shapes and means of making fog-signals required by the collision regulations, he shall, on the application of the owner, issue in respect of the ship—

(a) an exemption certificate stating which of the requirements F24[...] of the rules for life-saving appliances and applicable as aforesaid, the ship is exempt from and that the exemption is conditional on the ship plying only on the voyages and complying with the other conditions (if any) specified in the certificate, and

(b) a certificate (in this Act referred to as a qualified safety equipment certificate) showing that the ship complies with the rest of those requirements.

Issue for cargo
ships of radio
certificates and
exemption
certificates.

23. — (1) If the Minister, on receipt of declarations of survey in respect of a ship registered in the State, not being a passenger steamer, is satisfied that the ship complies with the radio rules and F26[navigation and tracking rules] applicable to the ship F27[...], he shall, on the application of the owner, issue in respect of the ship a certificate (in this Act referred to as a radio certificate) showing that the ship F28[complies with such requirements].

(2) If the Minister, on receipt of declarations of survey in respect of any such ship as aforesaid, is satisfied that the ship is exempt, by virtue of any exercise by him of a power in that behalf conferred on him by this Act or conferred on him by the rules in question, from any of the requirements of the radio rules or rules for F26[navigation and tracking rules] applicable to the ship F27[...] and that she complies with the rest of the requirements of the radio rules and rules for F26[navigation and tracking rules], he shall, on the application of the owner, issue in respect of the ship—

(a) an exemption certificate stating which of the requirements F27[...] relating to F29[radiocommunications] and F26[navigation and tracking systems and equipment], being requirements applicable as aforesaid, the ship is exempt from and that the exemption is conditional on the ship plying only on the voyages and complying with the other conditions (if any) specified in the certificate, and

(b) a certificate (in this Act referred to as a qualified radio certificate) showing that the ship complies with the rest of those requirements.

(3) Where any ship registered in the State is wholly exempt from the requirements of the radio rules and the rules for F26[navigation and tracking rules], the Minister shall on the application of the owner issue an exemption certificate stating that the ship is wholly exempt from the requirements F27[...] relating to F29[radiocommunications] and F26[navigation and tracking systems and equipment] and specifying the voyages on which, and conditions (if any) on which, the ship is so exempt.

Issue of general safety certificates, etc., on partial compliance with rules.

24. — Where a ship complies with all the requirements of the construction rules, rules for life-saving appliances, radio rules or F30[navigation and tracking rules] applicable to the ship and to the voyages on which she is to be engaged so far as those requirements are requirements of the Safety Convention applicable as aforesaid, the Minister may issue in respect of the ship a general safety certificate, short-voyage safety certificate, safety equipment certificate or radio certificate, as the case may be, notwithstanding that she is exempt from, or for some other reason does not comply with, any requirements of those rules that are not applicable requirements of the Safety Convention.

Notice of alterations and additional surveys.

25. — (1) The owner or master of a passenger steamer in respect of which any passenger steamer's certificate issued under the Principal Act, or any certificate issued under this Act, is in force shall, as soon as possible after any alteration is made in the steamer's hull, equipments or machinery affecting the efficiency thereof or the seaworthiness of the steamer, give written notice to the Minister containing full particulars of the alteration.

(2) The owner or master of a ship in respect of which any certificate issued under this Act is in force, other than a passenger steamer, shall, as soon as possible after any alteration is made in the appliances or equipments required by the rules for life-saving appliances, the radio rules, F31[navigation and tracking rules] or the collision regulations to be carried by the ship, being an alteration affecting the efficiency or completeness of those appliances or equipments, give written notice to the Minister containing full particulars of the alteration.

(3) If notice of any alteration is not given as required by this section, the owner or master of the ship shall be guilty of an offence under this section and shall be liable on summary conviction thereof to a fine not exceeding F32[€1,000].

(4) If the Minister has reason to believe that since the making of the last declaration of survey in respect of any such ship as aforesaid—

- (a) any such alteration has been made as is mentioned in subsection (1), or, as the case may be, in subsection (2) of this section; or
- (b) the hull, equipments or machinery of the ship (being a passenger steamer) have sustained any injury or are otherwise insufficient; or
- (c) the appliances or equipments of the ship (not being a passenger steamer) mentioned in subsection (2) of this section have sustained any injury or are otherwise insufficient;

the Minister may, without prejudice to his powers under section 279 of the Principal Act (which relates to the cancellation of certificates and additional surveys), require the ship to be again surveyed to such extent as he thinks fit and, if such requirement is not complied with, may cancel any passenger steamer's certificate issued in respect of the ship under the Principal Act or any certificate issued in respect of the ship under this Act.

(5) For the purpose of this section the expression “alteration” in relation to anything includes the renewal of any part of it.

Prohibition on proceeding to sea without appropriate certificates.

26. — (1) No ship registered in the State shall proceed to sea on an international voyage from a port in the State unless there is in force in respect of the ship—

(a) if she is a passenger steamer, a general safety certificate, a short-voyage safety certificate, a qualified safety certificate or a qualified short-voyage safety certificate which (subject to the provisions of this section relating to short-voyage safety certificates) is applicable to the voyage on which the ship is about to proceed and to the trade in which she is for the time being engaged;

(b) if she is not a passenger steamer, both—

(i) a safety equipment certificate or a qualified safety equipment certificate, and

(ii) a radio certificate or a qualified radio certificate, or an exemption certificate stating that she is wholly exempt from the requirements of the Safety Convention relating to F33[radiocommunications] and F34[navigation and tracking systems and equipment].

(2) Subsection (1) of this section shall not prohibit a ship, not being a passenger steamer, from proceeding to sea as aforesaid if there is in force in respect of the ship such certificate or certificates as would be required if she were a passenger steamer.

(3) For the purposes of this section, a qualified certificate shall not be deemed to be in force in respect of a ship unless there is also in force in respect of the ship the corresponding exemption certificate; and an exemption certificate shall be of no effect unless it is by its terms applicable to the voyage on which the ship is about to proceed.

(4) F35[If any ship proceeds, or attempts to proceed, to sea in contravention of this section—

(a) in the case of a passenger steamer, the owner or master of the steamer, without prejudice to any other remedy or penalty under the Merchant Shipping Acts commits an offence and is liable—

(i) on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding €5,000, or

(ii) on conviction on indictment, to a fine not exceeding €100,000,

or

(b) in the case of a ship not being a passenger steamer, the owner or master of the ship commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding €5,000.]

(5) F36[...]

(6) Where the Minister permits any passenger steamer in respect of which there is in force a short-voyage safety certificate, whether qualified or not, to proceed to sea on an international voyage from a port in the State not exceeding twelve hundred nautical miles in length between the last port of call in the State and the final port of destination, the certificate shall for the purposes of this section be deemed to be applicable to the voyage on which the steamer is about to proceed notwithstanding that the voyage exceeds six hundred nautical miles between the said ports.

(7) Where an exemption certificate issued in respect of any ship registered in the State specified any conditions on which the certificate is issued and any of those conditions is not complied with, the owner or master of the ship shall be guilty of an offence under this section and shall be liable on summary conviction thereof to a fine not exceeding F37[€5,000].

Miscellaneous provisions as to surveys and certificates.

27. — (1) Subsections (3) to (5) of section 272 of the Principal Act (which prescribe the contents of declarations of survey) shall cease to have effect.

(2) Subsection (2) of section 272 of the Principal Act (which requires a surveyor to deliver declarations of survey to the owner of a ship), section 273 of that Act (which requires the owner to deliver the declaration to the Minister) and section 275 of that Act (which relates to appeals to the court of survey) shall apply to surveys for the purpose of the issue of any certificate in respect of a ship under this Act as they apply to surveys for the purpose of the issue of passenger steamers' certificates.

(3) A safety certificate or radio certificate or an exemption certificate stating that a ship is wholly exempt from the provisions of the Safety Convention relating to F38[radiocommunications] and F39[navigation and tracking systems and equipment] shall be in force for one year and a safety equipment certificate shall be in force for twenty-four months, from the date of its issue, or for such shorter period as may be specified in the certificate, but no such certificate shall remain in force after notice is given by the Minister to the owner or master of the ship in respect of which it has been issued that the Minister has cancelled the certificate.

(4) An exemption certificate, other than a certificate stating that a ship is wholly exempt from the provisions of the Safety Convention relating to F38[radiocommunications] and F39[navigation and tracking systems and equipment], shall be in force for the same period as the corresponding qualified certificate.

(5) The Minister may grant an extension of any certificate issued under this Act in respect of a ship registered in the State for a period not exceeding one month from the date when the certificate would, but for the extension, have expired, or, if the ship is absent from the State on that date, for a period not exceeding five months from that date.

(6) Any general safety certificate or short-voyage safety certificate, whether qualified or not, may be combined in one document with a passenger steamer's certificate.

(7) Any certificate issued by the Minister under this Act, and any passenger steamer's certificate, whether or not combined in one document with a safety certificate under subsection (6) of this section, shall be admissible in evidence.

(8) The following provisions of the Principal Act shall apply to and in relation to certificates issued by the Minister, and ships certified, under this Act in the same manner as they apply to and in relation to passenger steamers' certificates and passenger steamers, namely, section 276 (which relates to the transmission of a certificate to the owner of the steamer), section 279 (which relates to the cancellation of certificates), section 280 (which relates to the surrender of certificates no longer in force), section 281 (which relates to the posting up of a certificate on board) and section 282 (which relates to the forging and falsification of certificates).

(9) The Minister may request the government of a country to which the Safety Convention applies to issue in respect of a ship registered in the State any certificate the issue of which is authorised under this Act; and a certificate issued in pursuance of such a request and containing a statement that it has been so issued shall have effect for the purposes of this Act as if it had been issued by the Minister and not by the government of that country.

*Safety Convention Ships not Registered in
the State.*

Certificates of Convention ships not registered in the State.

28. — (1) The Minister may, at the request of the government of a country to which the Safety Convention applies, issue in respect of a ship registered in that country any certificate the issue of which in respect of ships registered in the State is authorised under F40[...] this Act if he is satisfied that it is proper for him to do so; and a certificate issued in pursuance of such a request and containing a statement

that it has been so issued shall have effect for the purposes of this Act as if it had been issued by the said government and not by the Minister.

(2) The Minister shall make such regulations as appear to him to be necessary for the purpose of securing that certificates issued in accordance with the Safety Convention by the government of any country other than the State in respect of Safety Convention ships not registered in the State, or having effect under subsection (1) of this section as if so issued, shall be accepted as having the same force as corresponding certificates issued by the Minister under this Act; and any certificate required by those regulations to be so treated is in this Act referred to as an accepted Safety Convention certificate.

(3) A surveyor of ships, for the purpose of verifying—

(a) that there is in force in respect of a Safety Convention ship not registered in the State an accepted Safety Convention certificate; or

(b) that the condition of the hull, equipments and machinery of any such Safety Convention ship corresponds substantially with the particulars shown in such a certificate; or

F41[(c) except where such certificate states that the ship is wholly exempt from the provisions of the Safety Convention relating to radiocommunications, that the number, grades and qualifications of personnel on board correspond with those shown in the certificate; or]

F41[(d) that any conditions on which such a certificate, being the equivalent of an exemption certificate, is issued are complied with],

shall have all the powers of an inspector of the Department of Industry and Commerce under the Merchant Shipping Acts.

(4) Where there is attached to an accepted Safety Convention certificate in respect of a Safety Convention passenger steamer not registered in the State a memorandum which—

(a) has been issued by or under the authority of the government of the country in which the steamer is registered; and

(b) modifies for the purpose of any particular voyage, in view of the number of persons carried on that voyage, the particulars stated in the certificate with respect to the life-saving appliances,

the certificate shall have effect for the purpose of that voyage as if it were modified in accordance with the memorandum.

Modified survey of passenger steamers holding Convention certificates.

29. — (1) Where an accepted Safety Convention certificate is produced in respect of a Safety Convention passenger steamer not registered in the State—

(a) the steamer shall not be required to be surveyed under the Merchant Shipping Acts by a surveyor of ships except for the purpose of determining the number of passengers that she is fit to carry;

(b) on receipt of any declaration of survey for the purpose aforesaid, the Minister shall issue a certificate under section 274 of the Principal Act containing only a statement of the particulars set out in paragraph (b) of that section (which relates to the said number of passengers), and a certificate so issued shall have effect as a passenger steamer's certificate.

(2) Where there is produced in respect of any such passenger steamer as aforesaid an accepted Safety Convention certificate, and also a certificate issued by or under the authority of the government of the country in which the steamer is registered showing the number of passengers that the steamer is fit to carry, and the Minister

is satisfied that that number has been determined substantially in the same manner as in the case of a passenger steamer registered in the State, he may if he thinks fit dispense with any survey of the steamer for the purpose of determining the number of passengers that she is fit to carry and direct that the last-mentioned certificate shall have effect as a passenger steamer's certificate.

Miscellaneous
privileges of ships
holding
Convention
certificates.

30. — (1) Where an accepted Safety Convention certificate is produced in respect of a Safety Convention passenger steamer not registered in the State, the steamer shall be exempt from paragraphs (d) and (f) of subsection (1) of section 290 of the Principal Act (which relate to the equipments of emigrant ships) and section 420 of that Act (which relates to lights and fog-signals) and from the rules for life-saving appliances.

(2) Where an accepted Safety Convention certificate, being the equivalent of a safety equipment certificate, is produced in respect of a Safety Convention ship (other than a passenger steamer) not registered in the State, the ship shall be exempt from section 420 of the Principal Act (which relates to lights and fog-signals) and from the rules for life-saving appliances.

(3) Where an accepted Safety Convention certificate is produced in respect of a Safety Convention ship not registered in the State, and the certificate shows that the ship complies with the requirements of the Safety Convention relating to F42[radiocommunications] and F43[navigation and tracking rules], or that she is exempt from some of those requirements and complies with the rest, or that she is wholly exempt from those requirements, the ship shall be exempt from the provisions of the radio rules and F43[navigation and tracking systems and equipment].

Further
provisions as to
the production of
Convention
certificates.

31. — (1) The master of every Safety Convention ship not registered in the State shall produce to the officer of customs from whom a clearance of the ship is demanded in respect of an international voyage from a port in the State accepted Safety Convention certificates that are the equivalent of the certificates issued by the Minister under this Act that would be required to be in force in respect of the ship if she were a ship so registered; and a clearance shall not be granted, and the ship may be detained, until such certificates are so produced.

(2) The production of an accepted Safety Convention certificate being the equivalent of—

(a) a qualified certificate, or

(b) an exemption certificate, other than a certificate stating that a ship is wholly exempt from the provisions of the Safety Convention relating to F44[radiocommunications] and F45[navigation and tracking systems and equipment], shall not avail for the purposes of section 29 or section 30 of this Act unless there is also produced the corresponding exemption certificate or qualified certificate as the case may be.

*Miscellaneous Provisions for Furthering Safety
of Life at Sea.*

Information
about ship's
stability.

32. — F46[...]

Openings in
passenger
steamers' hulls
and watertight
bulkheads.

33. — (1) The Minister may in relation to passenger steamers registered in the State make rules for any of the following matters—

(a) for closing and keeping closed the openings in steamers' hulls and in watertight bulkheads;

(b) for securing, keeping in place and inspecting contrivances for closing any such openings as aforesaid;

(c) for operating the mechanisms of contrivances for closing any such openings as aforesaid and for drills in connection with the operation thereof;

(d) for requiring entry to be made in the official log-book or other record to be kept of any of the matters aforesaid.

(2) If any of the said rules is not complied with in relation to any such steamer as aforesaid, the master of the steamer shall be guilty of an offence under this section and shall be liable on summary conviction thereof to a fine not exceeding one hundred pounds.

Submersion of
sub-division load
lines.

34. — F47[...]

Report of dangers
to navigation.

35. — (1) The master of F48[an Irish ship] on meeting with dangerous ice, a dangerous derelict, a tropical storm or any other direct danger to navigation, shall send information accordingly, by all means of communication at his disposal and in accordance with rules to be made for the purposes of this section, to ships in the vicinity and to such authorities on shore as may be prescribed by those rules.

(2) Rules for the purposes of this section shall be made by the Minister and shall make such provision as appears to him to be necessary for the purpose of giving effect to the provisions of Regulations 2, 3 and 4 of Chapter V of the Safety Convention.

(3) If the master of a ship fails to comply with the provisions of this section, he shall be guilty of an offence under this section and shall be liable on summary conviction thereof to a fine not exceeding F49[€2,000].

(4) Every person in charge of a wireless telegraph station which is under the control of the F50[Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources] or which is established or installed under licence of the Minister for Posts and Telegraphs shall, on receiving the signal prescribed by the said rules for indicating that a message is about to be sent under this section, refrain from sending messages for a time sufficient to allow other stations to receive the message and, if so required by the Minister, shall transmit the message in such manner as may be required by the Minister, and compliance with this subsection shall be deemed to be a condition of every licence granted by the Minister for Posts and Telegraphs under the [Wireless Telegraphy Act, 1926](#) (No. 45 of 1926).

(5) Nothing in subsection (4) of this section shall interfere with the transmission of signals of distress prescribed under [section 36](#) of this Act.

(6) For the purposes of this section, the expression “ tropical storm ” means a hurricane, typhoon, cyclone or other storm of a similar nature, and the master of a ship shall be deemed to have met with a tropical storm if he has reason to believe that there is such a storm in his vicinity.

Signals of
distress.

36. — F51[(1) The Minister may make rules prescribing requirements for—

(a) what signals shall be used by ships as signals of distress and the circumstances in which, and the purposes for which, any such signal is to be used and the circumstances in which it is to be revoked,

(b) the survey of vessels for compliance with rules made under this section, including the extent, manner and intervals of such surveys, and

(c) the inspection of vessels for compliance with rules made under this section.]

(2) If the master of a ship uses or displays or causes or permits any person under his authority to use or display—

(a) any signal prescribed under this section except in the circumstances and for the purposes so prescribed, or

(b) any private signal, whether registered or not, that is liable to be mistaken for any signal so prescribed,

he shall be guilty of an offence under this section and shall be liable on summary conviction thereof to a fine not exceeding F52[€2,000] and shall further be liable to pay compensation for any labour undertaken, risk incurred or loss sustained in consequence of the signal having been supposed to be a signal of distress; and that compensation may, without prejudice to any other remedy, be recovered in the same manner as salvage.

Obligation to assist vessels, etc., in distress.

37. — (1) The master of F53[an Irish ship], on receiving at sea a signal of distress or information from any source that a vessel or aircraft is in distress, shall proceed with all speed to the assistance of the persons in distress (informing them if possible that he is doing so) unless he is unable, or in the special circumstances of the case considers it unreasonable or unnecessary, to do so, or unless he is released under the provisions of subsection (3) or subsection (4) of this section.

(2) Where the master of any ship in distress has requisitioned F52[an Irish ship] that has answered his call, it shall be the duty of the master of the requisitioned ship to comply with the requisition by continuing to proceed with all speed to the assistance of the persons in distress.

(3) A master shall be released from the obligation imposed by subsection (1) of this section as soon as he is informed of the requisition of one or more ships other than his own and that the requisition is being complied with by the ship or ships requisitioned.

(4) A master shall be released from the obligation imposed by subsection (1) of this section, and, if his ship has been requisitioned, from the obligations imposed by subsection (2) of this section, if he is informed by the persons in distress, or by the master of any ship that has reached the persons in distress, that assistance is no longer required.

F54[(5) If a master fails to comply with subsection (1) or (2) he or she commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding €5,000.]

(6) If the master of F55[an Irish ship], on receiving at sea a signal of distress or information from any source that a vessel or aircraft is in distress, is unable, or in the special circumstances of the case considers it unreasonable or unnecessary, to go to the assistance of the persons in distress, he shall forthwith cause a statement to be entered in the official log-book, or if there is no official log-book cause other record to be kept, of his reasons for not going to the assistance of those persons, and if he fails to do so he shall be guilty of an offence under this section and shall be liable on summary conviction thereof to a fine not exceeding F56[€2,000].

(7) The master of every F57[Irish ship] for which an official log is required shall enter or cause to be entered in the official log-book every signal of distress or message that a vessel, aircraft or person is in distress at sea.

(8) Nothing in this section shall affect the provisions of section 6 of the Maritime Conventions Act, 1911; and compliance by the master of a ship with the provisions of this section shall not affect his right, or the right of any other person, to salvage.

Carriage of dangerous goods.

38. — (1) The Minister may make rules for regulating in the interests of safety the carriage of dangerous goods in ships to which this section applies.

(2) This section applies to—

(a) F58[Irish ships, and]

(b) other ships while they are within any port in the State, or are embarking or disembarking passengers within the territorial waters of the State, or are loading or discharging cargo or fuel within those waters.

F58[(3) If any of the rules made under this section is not complied with in relation to any ship, the owner or master of the ship commits an offence and is liable—

(a) on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding €5,000, or

(b) on conviction on indictment, to a fine not exceeding €100,000,

and the ship is deemed for the purposes of Part V of the Principal Act to be unsafe by reason of improper loading.]

(4) Any goods declared by the rules made under this section to be dangerous in their nature shall be deemed to be dangerous goods for the purposes of Part V of the Principal Act.

Carriage of grain. **39.** — (1) Where grain is loaded on board any ship registered in the State, or is loaded within any port in the State on board any ship, all necessary and reasonable precautions shall be taken to prevent the grain from shifting, and if such precautions as aforesaid are not taken, the owner or the master of the ship, or any agent of the owner who was charged with the loading or with sending the ship to sea laden with the grain, shall be guilty of an offence under this subsection, and the ship shall be deemed for the purposes of Part V of the Principal Act to be unsafe by reason of improper loading.

(2) (a) Where any ship, having been loaded with grain outside the State without the taking of all necessary and reasonable precautions to prevent the grain from shifting, enters any port in the State so laden, the owner or master of the ship shall be guilty of an offence under this subsection, and the ship shall be deemed for the purposes of Part V of the Principal Act to be unsafe by reason of improper loading.

(b) This subsection shall not have effect if the ship would not have entered any such port but for stress of weather or any other circumstance that neither the master nor the owner nor the charterer (if any) could have prevented or forestalled.

(3) (a) Without prejudice to the generality of subsections (1) and (2) of this section, any particular precaution prescribed by rules made by the Minister under this subsection, in relation to the loading of ships generally or of ships of any class, as being a precaution to be treated for the purposes of those subsections as a necessary or reasonable precaution to prevent grain from shifting, shall be so treated in the case of ships generally, or of ships of that class, as the case may be.

(b) This subsection shall not apply where a ship is loaded in accordance in all respects with any provisions approved by the Minister as respects the loading in question other than rules made under this subsection.

F59[(4) If any person commits an offence under subsection (1) or (2), the person is liable—

(a) on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding €5,000, or

(b) on conviction on indictment, to a fine not exceeding €100,000.]

(5) F60[...]

F61[(6) A surveyor of ships or a person authorised by the Minister in that behalf may for securing the observance of the requirements of this section—

(a) board a ship and inspect any grain found on it, and

(b) (i) ask the master of the ship or any member of the crew such questions or make such requests, and

(ii) inspect such documents,

relating to the grain and its storage.]

(7) In this section the expression “ grain ” includes wheat, maize, oats, rye, barley, rice, pulses and seeds, and the expression “ ship carrying a cargo of grain ” means a ship carrying a quantity of grain exceeding one-third of the ship's registered tonnage, reckoning one hundred cubic feet or two tons weight of grain as equivalent to one ton of registered tonnage.

Method of giving
helm orders.

40. — (1) It shall not be lawful for any person on any ship registered in the State, when such ship is going ahead, either to give a helm or steering order containing the word “ starboard ” or the word “ right ” or any equivalent of either of those words unless such person intends that the head of such ship shall move to the right, or to give a helm or steering order containing the word “ port ” or the word “ left ” or any equivalent of either of those words unless such person intends that the head of the ship shall move to the left.

(2) Every person who does any act which is a contravention of this section shall be guilty of an offence under this section and shall be liable on summary conviction thereof to a fine not exceeding F62[€1,000].

Careful
navigation near
ice.

41. — (1) The master of a ship registered in the State, when ice is reported on or near his course, shall at night either proceed at a moderate speed or change his course so as to keep amply clear of the ice reported and the area of danger.

(2) If the master of any such ship fails to comply with this section, he shall be guilty of an offence under this section and shall be liable on summary conviction thereof to a fine not exceeding F63[€5,000].

Notice of Atlantic
routes.

42. — (1) The owner of any line of passenger steamers crossing the North Atlantic from or to any port in the State by regular routes shall give public notice, in such manner as may be directed by the Minister, of the routes which it is proposed that the ships belonging to the line should follow, and of any changes which may be made in those routes.

(2) If the owner of any such line of passenger steamers fails to comply with this section, he shall be guilty of an offence under this section and shall be liable on summary conviction thereof to a fine not exceeding F64[€1,000].

Supplemental.

Definition of “
passenger ” and
“ passenger
steamer. ”

43. — (1) In Part III of the Principal Act and in this Act, the expression “ passenger ” means any person carried in a ship, except—

(a) a person employed or engaged in any capacity on board the ship on the business of the ship,

(b) a person on board the ship either in pursuance of the obligation laid upon the master to carry shipwrecked, distressed or other persons or by reason of any circumstance that neither the master nor the owner nor the charterer (if any) could have prevented or forestalled, and

(c) a child under one year of age.

(2) In this Act the expression “ passenger steamer ” means a steamer carrying more than twelve passengers.

Removing persons in case of danger.

44. — Where the Minister for the purpose of enabling persons to be removed from any place in consequence of a threat to their lives has permitted more persons to be carried on board a ship than are permitted under the Merchant Shipping Acts apart from this section, the carriage of that excess of persons shall not be an offence under those Acts.

Power of Minister to exempt from safety requirements.

45. — (1) The Minister may exempt any ships or classes of ships from any requirements of the rules for life-saving appliances or any rules or regulations made under this Act, either absolutely or subject to such conditions as he thinks fit.

(2) Without prejudice to the preceding provisions of this section, where a ship not normally engaged on international voyages is required to undertake a single international voyage, the Minister may, if he is of opinion that the ship complies with safety requirements that are adequate for that voyage, exempt the ship from any of the safety requirements imposed by or under the Merchant Shipping Acts.

Exemption of certain ships from certain provisions of this Act.

F65[**46.** — (1) Nothing in this Act—

(a) prohibiting or preventing a ship from proceeding to sea unless there are in force in relation to the ship, or are produced, the appropriate certificates issued by the Minister under this Act or the appropriate accepted Safety Convention certificates,

(b) conferring powers on a surveyor of ships for the purpose of verifying the existence, validity or correctness of any Safety Convention certificate or that the conditions on which any such certificate was issued are complied with,

(c) requiring information about a ship’s stability to be carried on board, or

(d) imposing a penalty for the contravention of any rules relating to openings in ships’ hulls and watertight bulkheads,

unless in the case of information about a ship’s stability the Minister otherwise orders, applies to any troopship.

(2) Nothing in subsection (1) affects the exemption conferred by section 741 of the Principal Act on ships belonging to the State.

(3) Notwithstanding that any provision of this Act is expressed to apply to ships not registered in the State while they are within any port in the State, that provision does not apply to a ship that would not be within any such port but for stress of weather or any other circumstance, that neither the master nor the owner of the ship could have prevented or forestalled.]

Consequential amendments of Merchant Shipping Acts.

47. — (1) In subsection (3) of section 724 of the Principal Act, for the words “passenger steamers” there shall be substituted the word “ ships ”.

(2) Where a ship is detained under any provision of this Act authorising the detention of a ship until the production of a certificate, subsection (2) of section 460 of the Principal Act (which makes the owner of a ship liable to pay to the Minister his costs in connection with her detention and survey) shall apply as if she had been finally detained under that Act.

(3) Section 63 of the Act of 1933 (which requires notice to be given to consular officers of the detention of certain foreign ships, or of proceedings against masters

or owners under that Act) shall have effect as if any reference therein to that Act included a reference to this Act.

(4) In subsection (1) of section 272 of the Principal Act, for any reference to a wireless telegraph installation there shall be substituted a reference to a radio installation.

Section 8.

FIRST SCHEDULE.

ENACTMENTS REPEALED.

Session and Chapter or Number and Year	Short Title	Extent of Repeal
57 & 58 Vic., c. 60.	The Merchant Shipping Act, 1894.	In section 267, the definition of "passenger." In section 272, subsections (3) to (5). Sections 427, 431, 435 and 452 to 456.
6 Edw. 7, c. 48.	The Merchant Shipping Act, 1906.	Sections 3, 4, 9 (1) and 11.
9 & 10 Geo. 5, c. 38.	The Merchant Shipping (Wireless Telegraphy) Act, 1919.	The whole Act.
No. 42 of 1933.	The Merchant Shipping (Safety and Load Line Conventions) Act, 1933.	Part I. In section 58, in subsection (1), the words " and in subsection (1) of section 454. " In section 62, the words " Safety Convention or " in both places where they occur. The First Schedule.

Section 9.

SECOND SCHEDULE.

TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS.

1. Any rules or regulations made, or having effect as if made, under any enactment repealed by this Act shall, until revoked, have effect as if they had been made under the corresponding provision of this Act.

2. F66[...]

3. F66[...]

4. F66[...]



Number 29 of 1952

MERCHANT SHIPPING (SAFETY CONVENTION) ACT 1952

REVISED

Updated to 29 July 2025

About this Revised Act

This Revised Act presents the text of the Act as it has been amended since enactment, and preserves the format in which it was passed.

Related legislation

Merchant Shipping Acts 1894 to 2025: this Act is one of a group of Acts included in this collective citation (*Merchant Shipping (Investigation of Marine Accidents) Act 2025* (2/2025), s. 1(2)). The Acts in this group are:

- *Merchant Shipping Act 1894* (57 & 58 Vict.) c. 60
- *Merchant Shipping Act 1897* (60 & 61 Vict.) c. 59
- *Merchant Shipping (Exemption from Pilotage) Act 1897* (60 & 61 Vict.) c. 61 (*Repealed*)
- *Merchant Shipping (Liability of Shipowners) Act 1898* (61 & 62 Vict.) c. 14 (*Repealed*)
- *Merchant Shipping (Merchantile Marine Fund) Act 1898* (61 & 62 Vict.) c. 44
- *Merchant Shipping (Liability of Shipowners & Others) Act 1900* (63 & 64 Vict.) c. 32 (*Repealed*)
- *Merchant Shipping Act 1906* (6 Edw. 7) c. 48
- *Merchant Shipping Act 1907* (7 Edw. 7) c. 52 (*Repealed*)
- *Pilotage Act 1913* (2 & 3 Geo. 5) c. 31 (*Repealed*)
- *Merchant Shipping (Certificates) Act 1914* (4 & 5 Geo. 5) c. 42 (*Repealed*)
- *Merchant Shipping (Convention) Act 1914* (4 & 5 Geo. 5) c. 50 (*Repealed*)
- *Merchant Shipping (Salvage) Act 1916* (6 & 7 Geo. 5) c. 41 (*Repealed*)
- *Merchant Shipping (Wireless Telegraphy) Act 1919* (9 & 10 Geo. 5) c. 38 (*Repealed*)
- *Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Act 1920* (10 & 11 Geo. 5) c. 2
- *Merchant Shipping Act 1921* (11 & 12 Geo. 5) c. 28
- *Merchant Shipping (Helm Orders) Act 1932* (32/1932) (*Repealed*)
- *Merchant Shipping (International Labour Conventions) Act 1933* (29/1933)
- *Merchant Shipping (Safety and Load Line Conventions) Act 1933* (42/1933)
- *Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Act 1939* (12/1939)
- *Merchant Shipping Act 1947* (46/1947)
- *Merchant Shipping (Safety Convention) Act 1952* (29/1952)
- *Pilotage (Amendment) Act 1962* (2/1962) (*Repealed*)
- *Merchant Shipping Act 1966* (20/1966)
- *Merchant Shipping (Load Lines) Act 1968* (17/1968)
- *Merchant Shipping (Certification of Seamen) Act 1979* (37/1979)
- *Merchant Shipping Act 1981* (33/1981)
- *Merchant Shipping (Light Dues) Act 1983* (18/1983)

- *Fisheries (Amendment) Act 1983* (27/1983), s. 8 in so far as it amends the *Merchant Shipping Act 1894* and s. 10(2) (*Repealed*)
- *Merchant Shipping Act 1992* (2/1992)
- *Merchant Shipping (Salvage and Wreck) Act 1993* (34/1993)
- *Fisheries (Amendment) Act 1994* (23/1994) (*Repealed*)
- *Merchant Shipping (Liability of Shipowners and Others) Act 1996* (35/1996)
- *Merchant Shipping (Commissioners of Irish Lights) Act 1997* (37/1997)
- *Merchant Shipping (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1998* (20/1998)
- *Merchant Shipping (Investigation of Marine Casualties) Act 2000* (14/2000)
- *Sea Pollution (Hazardous Substances) (Compensation) Act 2005* (9/2005), s. 28
- *Maritime Safety Act 2005* (11/2005), other than Parts 5 and 6
- *Merchant Shipping Act 2010* (14/2010), other than s. 93
- *Local Government Reform Act 2014* (1/2014), s. 1(15) and the amendment to the *Merchant Shipping (Salvage and Wreck) Act 1993* provided for in s. 5(6) and Schedule 2, Part 6 (note: the reference to s. 5(6) appears to refer to s. 5(8))
- *Merchant Shipping (Registration of Ships) Act 2014* (43/2014)
- *Harbours Act 2015* (61/2015), s. 51
- *Merchant Shipping (Investigation of Marine Casualties) (Amendment) Act 2022* (8/2022)
- *Merchant Shipping (Investigation of Marine Accidents) Act 2025* (2/2025)

Annotations

This Revised Act is not annotated and only shows textual amendments. An annotated version of this revision is also available which shows textual and non-textual amendments and their sources. It also shows editorial notes including statutory instruments made pursuant to the Act and previous affecting provisions.

Material not updated in this revision

Where other legislation is amended by this Act, those amendments may have been superseded by other amendments in other legislation, or the amended legislation may have been repealed or revoked. This information is not represented in this revision but will be reflected in a revision of the amended legislation if one is available. A list of legislative changes to any Act, and to statutory instruments from 1972, may be found linked from the page of the Act or statutory instrument at www.irishstatutebook.ie.