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Nefndadeild Alþingis,  
b.t. Einars K. Guðfinnssonar,  
formanns samgöngunefndar  
Þórshamri v. Templarasund  
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*Alþingi*  
*Erindi nr. Þ 120/1345*  
*komudagur 10/4 1996*

Tilv. yðar  
Your ref.

Tilv. vor  
Our ref. 01

Dags.  
Date 01.04.1996

**Málefni: Tillaga til þingsályktunar um merkingar þilfarsfiskiskipa, 189. mál.**

Vísað er til bréfs yðar þann 14. febrúar 1996 um ofangreint málefni og umsagnar Siglingamálastofnunar þ. 14. mars sl. um sama málefni.

Til fróðleiks fyrir samgöngunefnd sendist hér með meðfylgjandi tillaga Bretlands, sem hefur verið lögð fram á vettvangi Alþjóðasiglingamálastofnunarinnar IMO, um merkingar skipa. Ef tillagan verður samþykkt mun hún hafa lagagildi á Íslandi en samkvæmt henni á að merkja öll skip (ekki einungis fiskiskip).

Virðingarfyllst,

**Benedikt E. Guðmundsson**  
siglingamálastjóri

Fylgirit: MSC 66/7/5.

Afrit: Samgönguráðuneytið



MARITIME SAFETY COMMITTEE

66th session  
Agenda item 7

**SAFETY OF NAVIGATION**

**Visible Ship Identification**

**Note by the Government of the United Kingdom**

1 At its sixty-fifth session, the Committee noted the United Kingdom's comments about the merits of requiring all ships to display unique identification marks (MSC 65/INF.12) and invited the United Kingdom to submit a proposal to the Committee's sixty-sixth session so that consideration could be given to including the item on the NAV Sub-Committee's work programme.

2 The United Kingdom believes that requiring ships to display unique identification marks will support the effective enforcement of mandatory ship reporting systems, routing systems and pollution prevention measures. Ships contravening mandatory systems, or discharge limits to sea, could be more easily identified during the hours of daylight by passing vessels or surveillance aircraft. Clearly visible identification marks could help to provide coastal States with better evidence to support legal actions against contraventions. Better ship recognition could also:

- .1 act as a positive incentive to shipmasters and others not to contravene regulations and recommendations, so enhancing safe navigation and the protection of the marine environment; and
- .2 be of positive help to a ship in need of prompt assistance in emergency situations.

3 Identification marks are widely used on fishing vessels and warships and the United Kingdom sees no reason why the principle should not be extended to merchant shipping.

4 When developing the IMO ship identification numbering scheme between its fifty-first and fifty-fourth sessions, the Committee considered similar visual identification proposals (MSC 51/13). However, the scheme for inserting the ship identification number on certificates was adopted on a voluntary basis (IMO resolution A.600(15)) without a corresponding requirement for ships to display their numbers.

5 Accepting that the use of IMO ship identification numbers as set out in resolution A.600(15) is impracticable for marking vessels, because of the number of digits involved, the United Kingdom proposes that the international radio call sign should be prominently displayed. Radio call signs are generally only four or five digits in length and would be a straightforward and inexpensive aid to identification. The radio call sign would have the added advantage of supporting effective radiocommunications between ships which are able to see each other.

6 To give effect to this proposal, the United Kingdom has developed the draft SOLAS regulation at annex 1, together with the draft standard at annex 2. Some of the text in the annexes is in square brackets because the United Kingdom recognises that the suitability of the parameters proposed will need

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farther consideration. For example: it may be difficult for small ships to find sections of the deck or ship's side of sufficient size; and it may be more appropriate to base the application of the regulation on a ship's summer freeboard, rather than its gross tonnage.

7 It is debatable whether the proposed new regulation should be included in SOLAS chapter V or SOLAS chapter XI, which now includes a regulation on inserting the ship's identification number on certificates. The United Kingdom would, however, prefer chapter V.

8 Given the NAV Sub-Committee's intention to finalize the text of a revised chapter V at its forty-second session (15-19 July), the United Kingdom would urge the Committee to include this item on the Sub-Committee's work programme.

**Action requested of the Committee**

9 The Committee is invited to consider the content of this paper and decide as appropriate.

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## ANNEX 1

## DRAFT SOLAS REGULATION FOR INCLUSION IN CHAPTER V OR CHAPTER XI

**Visual Identification**

All ships over [300 tons gross tonnage] shall display [on the ship's sides] [and on that section of the ship which is most visible from the air], distinctive identification in the form of the ship's current international radio call sign in accordance with the standards adopted by the Organization.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The UK proposes the draft standard, given at annex 2, recognizing that the suitability of the parameters proposed, particularly for the smaller ship, should be the subject of further consideration.

## ANNEX 2

**DRAFT STANDARD FOR VISUAL SHIP IDENTIFICATION****1 Content**

The identification marks to be used are the alpha-numeric combinations currently assigned to each ship as its international radio call sign.

**2 Location**

[Identification marks should appear both on the vessel's parallel mid-body situated above the load line and on that section of the ship which is most visible from the air.]

**3 Size****Sides of the ship**

3.1 The height of characters should be at least equivalent to two-thirds of the minimum freeboard, up to a maximum height of [2] metres.

3.2 The width of the group of characters should be proportional to the height.

3.3 Characters should be equally spaced.

**Section most visible from the Air**

3.4 Characters should be as large as practicable within the space available.

3.5 Characters should be equally spaced.

**4 Appearance**

4.1 All characters should appear as block capitals.

4.2 Characters should be marked using a durable, weather resistant paint.

4.3 The colour used should contrast starkly with the background colour.

**5 Maintenance**

Owners and Masters should ensure that identification marks are, as far as practicable, kept legible and free from rust, dirt or other obstruction.