

MED: Marine Equipment Directive (Directive 2014/90/EU), explained

The Marine Equipment Directive requires ship equipment needing flag State approval under SOLAS, MARPOL or COLREG to meet international standards, proven by notified bodies and the wheel mark, binding manufacturers, importers and distributors. It has applied since 18 September 2016; the current equipment list is Implementing Regulation (EU) 2026/1434 of 30 June 2026, in force since 31 August 2026.

Reviewed 24 September 2026 by Conphora compliance team · Next review 12 March 2027 · Not legal advice

Key facts

Reference	Directive 2014/90/EU	Act type	Directive
In force	17 September 2014	Applies from	18 September 2016
Amended by	Commission Delegated Directive (EU) 2021/1206, Regulation (EU) 2024/1689 (Artificial Intelligence Act)	Enforced by	Member States carry out market surveillance of marine equipment under the EU market surveillance framework (Article 25 still cites Chapter III of Regulation (EC) No 765/2008, and Articles 12(10) and 26(1) still cite Articles 19 and 21 of it; Regulation (EU) 2019/1020 deleted all of Chapter III, Articles 15 to 29, so those references are read as Regulation (EU) 2019/1020 from 16 July 2021, and the directive is point 58 of its Annex I), and their flag State administrations verify the equipment on board when they issue, endorse or renew the ships' convention certificates; checks may cover documents and wheel-marked equipment before or after it is placed on board.

Key dates

23 July 2014	Directive 2014/90/EU adopted by the European Parliament and the Council, replacing Council Directive 96/98/EC	title and signature block after Art. 42
17 September 2014	Entry into force, the twentieth day after publication in OJ L 257 of 28 August 2014; the five-year delegation of power to the Commission runs from this date	Art. 41 and Art. 37(2)
18 September 2016	Member States apply their transposing laws; Directive 96/98/EC repealed; equipment placed on board an EU ship from this date must meet the international instruments applicable when it is placed on board; the wheel mark becomes the reference for equivalence when a ship transfers to an EU flag	Art. 4(1), Art. 7(1), Art. 39(1) and Art. 40(1)
8 April 2018	Delegated Regulation (EU) 2018/414 in force: the items of marine equipment that may benefit from electronic tagging are listed	Art. 1 and Art. 2, OJ L 75 of 19 March 2018
10 May 2018	Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/608 in force: technical criteria for RFID and data-matrix electronic tags that supplement or replace the wheel mark	Art. 1 to Art. 4, OJ L 101 of 20 April 2018
11 August 2021	Delegated Directive (EU) 2021/1206 in force: Annex III, point 19 now requires testing laboratories used by notified bodies to meet EN ISO/IEC 17025:2017; transposition by 31 January 2022	Art. 1 to Art. 3, OJ L 261 of 22 July 2021
28 February 2022	Danish executive order nr. 251 of 21 February 2022 in force, transposing Delegated Directive (EU) 2021/1206 into executive order nr. 422 of 17 May 2016 on equipment in ships	§ 1 and § 2
1 August 2024	Regulation (EU) 2024/1689 (Artificial Intelligence Act) in force; its Article 105 adds Article 8(5) to the directive on AI systems that are safety components of marine equipment	Art. 105 and Art. 113, OJ L of 12 July 2024
2 August 2026	Article 8(5) applies: when pursuing standards or adopting technical specifications for AI systems that are safety components, the Commission takes into account Chapter III, Section 2 of the AI Act	Art. 113; Art. 8(5)
31 August 2026	Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2026/1434 in force, the fortieth day after publication on 22 July 2026: the current list of marine equipment items with their requirements, testing standards and conformity assessment modules; Implementing Regulation (EU) 2025/1533 repealed	Art. 1, Art. 2 and Art. 4
4 September 2027	End of the transitional period for items first inserted by Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/1975: equipment complying with national type-approval requirements in force before 4 September 2024 may be placed on the market and on board until this date	Art. 3(1)

23 September 2028	End of the transitional period for items first inserted by Implementing Regulation (EU) 2025/1533: equipment complying with national type-approval requirements in force before 23 September 2025 may be placed on the market and on board until this date	Art. 3(2)
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Obligations by role

Manufacturer (including brand owners)

- By affixing the wheel mark, take on responsibility that the equipment has been designed and manufactured in accordance with the technical specifications and standards implemented under Article 35(2), currently Implementing Regulation (EU) 2026/1434, and assume the duties of Article 12(2) to (9). Art. 12(1); Art. 1
- Draw up the technical documentation and have the applicable conformity assessment carried out through a single notified body of your choice, using the module the implementing regulation allows for the item: EC type-examination (module B) followed by production quality assurance (module D), product quality assurance (module E) or product verification (module F), or EC unit verification (module G) for equipment produced individually or in small quantities. Art. 12(2), Art. 15(2) and Annex II, module B, point 3
- Draw up the technical documentation that the applicable conformity assessment module requires for the item of marine equipment. Art. 12(2) and Annex II, module B, point 3
- Have the conformity assessment carried out through a single notified body of your choice, using the module the implementing regulation allows: EC type-examination (module B) followed by module D, E or F, or EC unit verification (module G) for equipment produced individually or in small quantities.
Art. 12(2) and Art. 15(2)
- Once conformity is demonstrated, draw up the EU declaration of conformity following the model in Annex III to Decision No 768/2008/EC with the elements of the relevant modules, keep it up to date, and affix the wheel mark at the end of the production phase, visibly, legibly and indelibly on the product or its data plate and where relevant embedded in its software, followed by the notified body's identification number where that body is involved in production control and the year of affixing.
Art. 12(3), Art. 16(2), Art. 9 and Art. 10
- Once conformity is demonstrated, draw up the EU declaration of conformity following the model in Annex III to Decision No 768/2008/EC with the elements of the relevant modules, and keep it up to date. Art. 12(3) and Art. 16(2)
- Affix the wheel mark at the end of the production phase, visibly, legibly and indelibly on the product or its data plate and, where relevant, embedded in its software, followed by the notified body's identification number where that body is involved in production control and the year of affixing.
Art. 9 and Art. 10
- Provide a copy of the EU declaration of conformity to the ship when the equipment is placed on board, translated into the languages the flag Member State requires and at least a language commonly used in the maritime transport sector, to be kept on board until the equipment is removed, and provide a copy to the notified body that carried out the assessment. Art. 16(4) and Art. 16(5)
- Keep the technical documentation and the EU declaration of conformity for at least 10 years after the wheel mark has been affixed and in no case for a period shorter than the expected life of the equipment.
Art. 12(4)
- Keep series production in conformity, taking account of changes in the equipment's design or characteristics and of changes in the international instruments on which conformity was declared, and have a new conformity assessment carried out when Annex II requires it; inform the notified body holding the type-examination file of any modification that may affect conformity or the validity of the certificate. Art. 12(5) and Annex II, module B, point 7
- Mark the product with a type, batch or serial number or other identifier and with your name, registered trade name or trade mark and a single contact address, or where the size or nature of the product does not allow it, on the packaging or in an accompanying document, and supply instructions and all information needed for safe installation on board and safe use, including any limitations of use, together

with any other documentation the international instruments or testing standards require.

Art. 12(6), Art. 12(7) and Art. 12(8)

- Mark the product with a type, batch or serial number or other identifier and with your name, registered trade name or trade mark and a single contact address or, where the product does not allow it, put them on the packaging or in an accompanying document. Art. 12(6) and Art. 12(7)
- Supply instructions and all information needed for safe installation on board and safe use, including any limitations of use, together with any other documentation the international instruments or testing standards require. Art. 12(8)
- If you consider or have reason to believe that wheel-marked equipment does not conform to the applicable requirements and testing standards, immediately bring it into conformity, withdraw or recall it, and where it presents a risk inform the competent national authorities with details of the non-compliance and the corrective measures; on reasoned request provide all conformity information and documentation in a language the authority accepts, give access to your premises for market surveillance, provide samples at your own cost where reasonable and cooperate on risk-elimination measures. Art. 12(9), Art. 12(10) and Art. 25(4)
- If you consider that wheel-marked equipment does not conform to the applicable requirements and testing standards, immediately bring it into conformity, withdraw or recall it, and where it presents a risk inform the competent national authorities with details of the non-compliance and the corrective measures. Art. 12(9)
- On reasoned request, provide all conformity information and documentation in a language the authority accepts, give access to your premises for market surveillance, provide samples at your own cost where reasonable and cooperate on measures to eliminate the risks. Art. 12(10) and Art. 25(4)

Authorised representative (mandatory for manufacturers outside the EU)

- If the manufacturer is not located in the territory of at least one Member State, be appointed by a written mandate that names you and the address at which you can be contacted; the appointment is mandatory for such manufacturers. Art. 13(1)
- Perform the tasks specified in the mandate, which must at least let you keep the EU declaration of conformity and the technical documentation at the disposal of the national surveillance authorities for at least 10 years after the wheel mark has been affixed and never shorter than the expected life of the equipment, provide conformity information and documentation on reasoned request, and cooperate with the authorities on risk-elimination measures. Art. 13(3)
- Keep the EU declaration of conformity and the technical documentation at the disposal of the national surveillance authorities for at least 10 years after the wheel mark has been affixed, and never for less than the expected life of the equipment. Art. 13(3)(a)
- On reasoned request, provide the authority with the information and documentation demonstrating conformity, and cooperate with it on measures to eliminate the risks of the equipment covered by your mandate. Art. 13(3)(b) and Art. 13(3)(c)
- Do not take over the manufacturer's responsibility under Article 12(1) for design and manufacture to the implemented specifications and standards, nor the drawing-up of the technical documentation; those cannot form part of the mandate. Art. 13(2)
- Where the mandate specifies it, lodge the application for EC type-examination or quality-system assessment with the notified body, inform the notified body of modifications to the approved type, keep the certificates and documentation, and affix the wheel mark and draw up the declaration on the manufacturer's behalf and under its responsibility; under module F you may not take over the manufacturing and lot-homogeneity duties.

Annex II, module B, point 10, module D, point 8, module E, point 8, module F, point 8, and module G, point 6

- Where the mandate specifies it, lodge the application for EC type-examination or quality-system assessment with the notified body, and inform it of modifications to the approved type; under module F you may not take over the manufacturing and lot-homogeneity duties.

Annex II, module B, point 10, module D, point 8, module E, point 8, module F, point 8, and module G, point 6

- Where the mandate specifies it, affix the wheel mark on the manufacturer's behalf and under its responsibility. Annex II, module D, point 8, module E, point 8, module F, point 8, and module G, point 6
- Where the mandate specifies it, draw up the EU declaration of conformity on the manufacturer's behalf and under its responsibility, and keep the certificates and documentation with it.

Annex II, module B, point 10, module D, point 8, module E, point 8, module F, point 8, and module G, point 6

- On request, identify to the market surveillance authorities every economic operator that supplied you with a product and every operator you supplied, for at least 10 years after the wheel mark was affixed and never shorter than the expected life of the equipment. Art. 14(4)

Importer

- Indicate your name, registered trade name or registered trade mark and the address at which you can be contacted on the product or, where that is not possible, on its packaging or in a document accompanying the product, or both. Art. 14(1)
- On reasoned request from a competent authority, provide all the information and documentation necessary to demonstrate the conformity of the product in a language the authority can easily understand or accepts, and cooperate with that authority on any action taken to eliminate the risks posed by products you placed on the market. Art. 14(2)
- If you place equipment on the market or on board an EU ship under your own name or trademark, or modify equipment already placed on the market in a way that may affect compliance with the applicable requirements, you are considered the manufacturer and carry all the obligations of Article 12. Art. 14(3)
- On request, identify to the market surveillance authorities every economic operator that supplied you with a product and every operator you supplied, for at least 10 years after the wheel mark was affixed and never shorter than the expected life of the equipment. Art. 14(4)
- Cooperate with the market surveillance authorities in their evaluation of equipment believed to present a risk to maritime safety, health or the environment, take the corrective action they require within the period they prescribe, and ensure it covers all the products concerned that you made available throughout the Union or delivered to be placed on board EU ships. Art. 26(1), Art. 26(3) and Art. 28(2)

Distributor (wholesaler, ship chandler or retailer)

- On reasoned request from a competent authority, provide all the information and documentation necessary to demonstrate the conformity of the product in a language the authority can easily understand or accepts, and cooperate with that authority on any action taken to eliminate the risks posed by products you placed on the market. Art. 14(2)
- If you make equipment available under your own name or trademark, or modify equipment already placed on the market in a way that may affect compliance with the applicable requirements, you are considered the manufacturer and carry all the obligations of Article 12. Art. 14(3)
- On request, identify to the market surveillance authorities every economic operator that supplied you with a product and every operator you supplied, for at least 10 years after the wheel mark was affixed and never shorter than the expected life of the equipment. Art. 14(4)
- Cooperate with the market surveillance authorities in their evaluation of equipment believed to present a risk, take the corrective action they require within the period they prescribe, and put an end to any formal non-compliance they find, such as a missing or wrongly affixed wheel mark, a missing or incorrect EU declaration of conformity, incomplete technical documentation or a declaration not sent to the ship. Art. 26(1), Art. 26(3) and Art. 29(1)

Penalties

The directive contains no penalties article of its own; it is listed in Annex II to Regulation (EU) 2019/1020 among the Union harmonisation legislation without provisions on penalties, so Member States must lay down effective, proportionate and dissuasive penalties for infringements by economic operators under Article 41 of that regulation. Market surveillance authorities evaluate equipment believed to present a risk to maritime safety, health or the environment, require corrective action, withdrawal or recall within a period commensurate with the risk, inform the notified body, and if the operator fails to act prohibit or restrict the making available or placing on board of the equipment, withdraw or recall it and notify the Commission and the other Member States; compliant equipment that still presents a risk can be treated the same way, and formal non-compliance, such as a wheel mark affixed in breach of Articles 9 or 10, a missing wheel mark, a missing or incorrect EU declaration of conformity, unavailable or incomplete technical documentation or a declaration not sent to the ship, must be ended and otherwise leads to restriction, prohibition, withdrawal or recall. Notified bodies must refuse a certificate where the manufacturer's obligations are not met and suspend, restrict or withdraw a certificate where a product no longer complies and corrective measures are not taken. In Denmark, executive order nr. 422 of 17 May 2016 on equipment in ships, issued by Søfartsstyrelsen under lov om sikkerhed til søs, punishes breaches with a fine or imprisonment of up to one year, rising to two years where the breach harmed or endangered life or health, followed an earlier prohibition or order for the same or a similar matter, or gained or aimed at an economic advantage, with companies liable under Chapter 5 of the Danish Criminal Code; under lov om sikkerhed til søs, Søfartsstyrelsen can order marketing stopped and products recalled, use the control powers of the product and market surveillance act, detain a ship that lacks prescribed equipment or whose equipment is defective, and failure to comply with its orders is punished with a fine or imprisonment of up to one year.

Art. 23(2), Art. 23(3), Art. 26, Art. 28 and Art. 29; Art. 41 and Annex II; § 2; § 4, stk. 4 and 5, § 14, stk. 2, § 18 and § 28

Checklist

- 1. Confirm the equipment is destined for a ship flying an EU Member State flag within SOLAS, MARPOL or COLREG and find the item in the Annex to Implementing Regulation (EU) 2026/1434 with its requirements, testing standards, allowed modules and placing-on-the-market and placing-on-board dates (Articles 3 and 4; Implementing Regulation (EU) 2026/1434, Article 1 and Annex).
- 2. Decide your role for each product, remembering that selling under your own name or trademark or modifying the equipment makes you the manufacturer, and appoint an EU authorised representative by written mandate if the manufacturer is not located in a Member State (Articles 13(1) and 14(3)).
- 3. Compile the technical documentation with the risk analysis, drawings, the list of applicable requirements and testing standards, the solutions adopted, calculations and test reports (Annex II, module B, point 3, or module G, point 2).
- 4. Choose a single notified body, apply for EC type-examination (module B) and the production module the implementing regulation allows (D, E or F), or for EC unit verification (module G) for individual or small-quantity production (Article 15(2) and Annex II).
- 5. Draw up the EU declaration of conformity on the Decision No 768/2008/EC model with the elements of the modules used, keep it up to date and send a copy to the notified body (Article 16(2) and 16(5)).
- 6. Affix the wheel mark at the end of production on the product or its data plate, embedded in software where relevant, followed by the notified body number and the year, or use an RFID or data-matrix electronic tag for items listed in Delegated Regulation (EU) 2018/414 per the criteria of Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/608 (Articles 9 to 11).
- 7. Mark the identifier, your name and single contact address and, for importers, the importer's name and address, and supply installation and use instructions with any limitations of use (Articles 12(6) to 12(8) and 14(1)).
- 8. Deliver a translated copy of the EU declaration of conformity with the equipment to the ship, to be kept on board until the equipment is removed (Article 16(4)).
- 9. Keep the technical documentation, declaration and certificates for at least 10 years after affixing the wheel mark and never shorter than the equipment's expected life, and keep supplier and customer traceability for the same period (Articles 12(4), 13(3) and 14(4)).
- 10. Set up the corrective-action and authority-notification procedure and track the annual implementing regulation and the placing-on-board dates so series production stays in conformity (Articles 12(5), 12(9) and 35(2)).

Sources

1. Directive 2014/90/EU on marine equipment, consolidated text of 2 August 2026 (EUR-Lex) — <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:02014L0090-20260802>
2. Directive 2014/90/EU as published in OJ L 257, 28 August 2014 (EUR-Lex) — <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32014L0090>
3. Document information, dates and relationships for CELEX 32014L0090 (EUR-Lex) — <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:32014L0090>
4. Commission Delegated Directive (EU) 2021/1206 amending Annex III as regards the standard for testing laboratories (EUR-Lex) — <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32021L1206>
5. Regulation (EU) 2024/1689, the Artificial Intelligence Act, Article 105 amending Directive 2014/90/EU (EUR-Lex) — <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32024R1689>
6. Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2026/1434 on design, construction and performance requirements and testing standards for marine equipment (EUR-Lex) — <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32026R1434>
7. Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2018/414 identifying the items of marine equipment which can benefit from electronic tagging (EUR-Lex) — <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32018R0414>
8. Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/608 laying down technical criteria for electronic tags for marine equipment (EUR-Lex) — <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32018R0608>
9. Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2024/1295 on harmonised technical specifications and testing standards for fire hoses (EUR-Lex) — <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32024R1295>
10. Regulation (EU) 2019/1020 on market surveillance and compliance of products, Article 41 and Annexes I and II (EUR-Lex) — <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32019R1020>
11. EU actions on safety and environment protection, section on marine equipment (European Commission, DG MOVE) — https://transport.ec.europa.eu/transport-modes/maritime/safety-and-environment/eu-actions-safety-and-environment-protection_en
12. Marine Equipment Directive, MarED and the MED Portal of approved products (European Maritime Safety Agency) — <https://www.emsa.europa.eu/med-directive-mared.html>
13. Bekendtgørelse om udstyr i skibe, BEK nr. 422 af 17. maj 2016, the Danish implementation of the directive (Retsinformation) — <https://www.retsinformation.dk/eli/lta/2016/422>
14. Bekendtgørelse om ændring af bekendtgørelse om udstyr i skibe, BEK nr. 251 af 21. februar 2022, transposing Delegated Directive (EU) 2021/1206 (Retsinformation) — <https://www.retsinformation.dk/eli/lta/2022/251>
15. Bekendtgørelse af lov om sikkerhed til søs, LBK nr. 221 af 11. februar 2022 (Retsinformation) — <https://www.retsinformation.dk/eli/lta/2022/221>