

Interpretations of the COLREG

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COL REG 1 Interpretation to COLREG 1972 Annex 1, Section 9(b)

1

(Jan 2006)
(Rev.1 Oct 2012)
(Corr.1 Feb 2013)

Regulation

Annex 1, Section 9(b) reads:

(i) All round lights shall be so located as not to be obscured by masts, topmasts or superstructures within angular sectors of more than 6°, except anchor lights prescribed in Rule 30, which need not to be placed at an impractical height above the hull.

(ii) If it is impractical to comply with paragraph (b)(i) of this section by exhibiting only one all-round light, two all-round lights shall be used suitably positioned or screened so that they appear, as far as practicable, as one light at the distance of one mile.

Interpretation

1. In order to comply with the one (1) mile requirement in 9(b)(ii), the screening of each all-round light shall be as follows:

$$\theta_2 \leq 360 - \theta_1$$

where

θ_1 : Screened angle of one all-round light

θ_2 : Screened angle of the other all-round light

2. Screenings details and the arrangement of obstacles are to be considered by Societies when carrying out the drawing approval process.

Note:

1. This UI is to be uniformly implemented by IACS Members and Associates from 1 July 2006.

2. Rev.1 of this UI is to be uniformly implemented by IACS Societies from 1 July 2013 when carrying out the drawing approval process, including re-fitting of navigation light.

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Interpretation to COLREG 1972 Rule 23 (a)

Deleted 1st January 2009 to coincide with MSC.253(83).

(Jan 2006)
(Corr.1
Apr 2006)

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COL REG 3 Interpretation to COLREG 1972 Annex 1, Section 3 (b)

3

(Jan 2006)
(Rev.1
May 2009)
(Corr.1
Jan 2010)

Regulation

Annex 1, Section 3(b) reads: On power-driven vessels of 20 m or more in length the sidelights shall not be placed in front of the forward masthead lights. They shall be placed at or near the side of the vessel.

Interpretation

The term "near the side" is interpreted as being a distance of not more than 10% of the breadth of the vessel inboard from the side, up to a maximum of 1 metre.

Where the application of above requirement is impractical (e.g. small ships with superstructure of reduced width) exemption may be given on the basis of the Flag Authority acceptance.

Note:

1. This UI is to be uniformly implemented by IACS Members and Associates from 1 July 2006.
2. Changes introduced in Rev.1 are to be uniformly implemented by IACS Societies for ships contracted for construction on or after 1 January 2010.
3. The "contracted for construction" date means the date on which the contract to build the vessel is signed between the prospective owner and the shipbuilder. For further details regarding the date of "contract for construction", refer to IACS Procedural Requirement (PR) No. 29.

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COL REG 4 Interpretation to COLREG 1972 Rule 27(b)(i)

Regulation

(Jan 2006) Rule 27(b)(i) reads:

(Corr.1

July 2007) A vessel restricted in her ability to manoeuvre, except a vessel engaged in mine clearance operations, shall exhibit:

(i) three all-round lights in line where they can best be seen. The highest and lowest of these lights shall be red and the middle light shall be white;

Interpretation

“Not under command” (NUC) all-round red lights (Rule 27(a)(i)) may be used as part of the “Restricted Ability to Manoeuvre” (RAM) lights provided the vertical and horizontal distances required by COLREG 1972 are complied with and the electrical system is arranged so that the all-round white light (RAM) may be switched on independently from the two all-round red lights (NUC).

Note

This UI is to be uniformly implemented by IACS Members and Associates from 1 July 2006.



COLR Interpretation to COLREG 1972 Annex I EG5 Sections 9(a)(i) and 10(a)(i)

(May 2018)

Regulation

Annex I, Sections 9(a)(i) and 10(a)(i) read:

9(a)(i) – Horizontal sectors

In the forward direction, sidelights as fitted on the vessel shall show the minimum required intensities. The intensities shall decrease to reach practical cut-off between 1 degree and 3 degrees outside the prescribed sectors.

10(a)(i) - Vertical sectors

The vertical sectors of electric lights as fitted, with the exception of lights on sailing vessels underway shall ensure that at least the required minimum intensity is maintained at all angles from 5 degrees above to 5 degrees below the horizontal;

Interpretation

9(a)(i) – Horizontal sectors (MSC.1/Circ.1427, MSC.1/Circ.1260/Rev.1)

COLREG Annex I, section 9(a)(i) would require the full intensity of the side lights to be maintained in the forward direction of 1° outside the prescribed sector (one-degree toe-in sector) with the practical cut-off between 1° and 3°. This is needed to enable other vessels to determine a "head-on-situation" as per COLREG rule 14.

Note:

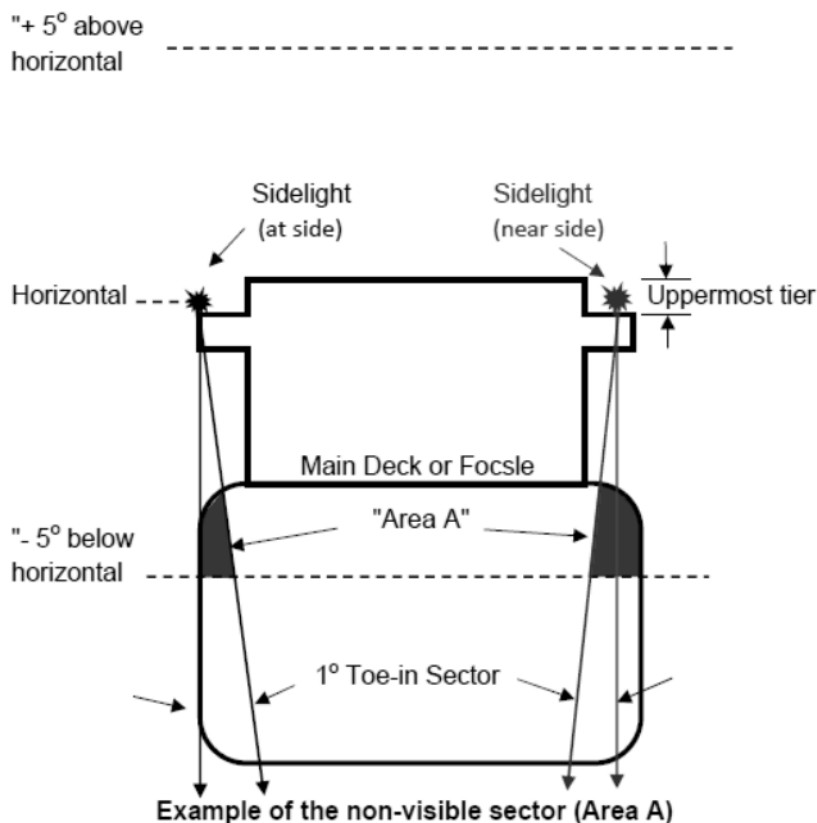
1. This Unified Interpretation is to be uniformly implemented by IACS Societies on ships contracted for construction on or after 1 July 2019 when encountering design difficulties during the approval of navigation light arrangements. The provisions of this Unified Interpretation will also be applied when design difficulties are encountered during the approval of navigation light arrangements on ships contracted for construction earlier than 1 July 2019 unless they are instructed otherwise in writing by the Administration on whose behalf they are authorized to act as a Recognized Organization.

COLR EG5

(Cont)

10(a)(i) - Vertical sectors

Where sidelights, installed in a position at or "near the side" ^[1], are not fully visible at all angles from 5 degrees above to 5 degrees below the horizontal including the 1° toe-in sector (e.g., see Area A), then that installation is acceptable provided the installed sidelights are visible, with the ship in all normal conditions of trim corresponding to the lightest seagoing draft in the approved T&S Booklet, at a minimum distance of 1000 m measured from the stem when viewed from sea level throughout the horizontal plane of 112.5° defined by Rule 21(b) including the horizontal 1° toe-in sector in the forward direction prescribed in 9(a)(i).



^[1] Refer to MSC.1/Circ.1260/Rev.1, for interpretation of "near the side".

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