



PORTS AND YACHTING DIRECTORATE

NORTICE TO MARINERS NO 27 of 2019

Our Ref: **TM/PYD/87/01**

22 March 2019



Transport Malta

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Fitting of Automatic Identification System (AIS) Equipment on Commercial Vessels Employed in Diving Activities and Access to Historic Wrecks

Transport Malta would like to bring to the attention of owners, operators, masters and crew of commercial vessels employed in diving activities that Heritage Malta and the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage have set a number of conditions relating to the carriage of divers to and from historical wrecks, including registration with Heritage Malta. Additionally, in order for Heritage Malta to consider and accept commercial vessels for the provision of such services, all vessels must be equipped with Automatic Identification System (AIS) equipment. Vessels not complying with the Commercial Vessel Regulations (S.L. 499.23) are not permitted to engage in diving operations on historical wrecks.

In view of the above, Transport Malta hereby notifies that with effect from 1st May 2019, all commercial vessels intending on carrying out diving operations on historical wrecks must be fitted with AIS, obtain the necessary permits from Heritage Malta and obtain clearance from VTS Valletta.

This requirement also has the purpose to assist VTS personnel in monitoring and coordinating the movements of maritime traffic in order to enhance safety of navigation and the security and the efficiency of marine operations and shipping movements; and is in line with the provisions described in the Commercial Vessels Regulations (S.L. 499.23).

The AIS required to be fitted must be capable, as a minimum, of transmitting AIS signals. Once fitted, the AIS equipment and transponder must be switched on and operational at all times. AIS may only be switched off in exceptional circumstances where the Master considers this to be necessary in the interest of safety and security of his vessel.



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As a minimum, the equipment should transmit the name of the vessel, speed, course, position, vessel type and dimensions. Other additional information, depending on the size of the vessel, must also be transmitted, for example the call sign and the MMSI number.

Compliance with this requirement is mandatory as from the date indicated above. Non-compliance will entail the prohibition of stopping/diving on these sites and/or navigation in general, without prejudice to other applicable penalties and legal proceedings.