
European Union Inland Waterways - Issue of European Vessel Identification Numbers (ENIs)

Notice to all Inland Waterways Vessel Owners and Operators wishing to operate on Union waterways in mainland Europe

This note should be read with Merchant Shipping Notice 1824 (as amended) "EU Directive 2006/87/EC (as amended) - Laying Down Technical Requirements for Inland Waterway Vessels"

Summary

- This MGN is only relevant to those who own or operate inland waterway vessels, and wish to operate them on Union waterways in mainland Europe.
- The Royal Yachting Association is the appointed competent authority in the UK for issuing unique European Vessel Identification Numbers (ENIs). ENIs are required to be issued to inland waterways vessels operating on the Union inland waterways of mainland Europe in accordance with Council Directive 2006/87/EC as amended.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Directive 2006/87/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 12 December 2006 "laying down technical requirements for inland waterways vessels", as amended, ("the Directive") applies to various types of vessel, including:-
 - inland waterway passenger vessels, tugs and pusher vessels of any length;
 - other inland waterway vessels having a length of 20m or more, including cargo vessels and private pleasure vessels.
- 1.2 For those vessels subject to the Directive, compliance with its applicable technical requirements is signified by the issue of a Union Inland Navigation Certificate ("UINC") by a competent authority.
- 1.3 The Directive requires a unique European Vessel Identification Number (ENI) to be entered on the UINC by the competent authority of the member State that issues the UINC.

- 1.4 Only one single ENI can be assigned to a vessel. The ENI is issued only once and remains unchanged throughout the whole lifetime of the vessel. Unless the vessel already possesses an ENI, an ENI needs to be assigned to the vessel by the competent authority of the Member State in which the vessel has been registered or has its home port or base.
- 1.5 The owner of a vessel, or the owner's representative, is required by Article 2.18 of Directive 2006/87/EC (as amended) to apply to a competent authority for assignment of the ENI.
- 1.6 The issue of an ENI of itself does not indicate any assessment of seaworthiness or hull condition, so attracts no liability with regard to the condition of a vessel.
- 1.7 The Directive does not normally apply to sea going vessels which operate, or are based on, tidal waters, and operate only temporarily on inland waterways.

2. Implementation in the UK

- 2.1 The UK has transposed the Directive into UK law with derogations in respect of UK inland waterways (categorised waters). The effect of the derogation is twofold:
 - 2.1.1 Vessels that operate only on UK inland waterways, and comply with UK requirements, are exempted from the Directive, and not required to have a UINC.
 - 2.1.2 The current UK policy is that the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) will not act as a competent authority for the issue of UINCs in accordance with the Directive.
- 2.2 Vessel owners and operators who are required to comply with the Directive in mainland Europe need to liaise with a competent authority in another EU Member State in order to have their vessels inspected and issued with a UINC.
- 2.3 However, the MCA recognises that the owners and operators of UK vessels may need an ENI issued by a competent authority in the UK, in order to have their vessels inspected and certificated in another Member State.

3. Competent Authority for Issuing ENIs

- 3.1 The Royal Yachting Association (RYA) is a national representative organisation for recreational boating, and is a Certifying Authority recognised by the MCA. The RYA is also a UK Notified Body for the purpose of the EU Recreational Craft Directive. The RYA is recognised within Europe as a UK Issuing Authority for the International Certificate for Operators of Pleasure Craft pursuant to UNECE (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe) Inland Transport Committee Resolution 40.
- 3.2 Pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding dated 10 May 2011, the UK MCA appointed the RYA as the competent authority in the United Kingdom for the purposes of assigning and issuing unique European Vessel Identification Numbers (ENIs) in accordance with Article 2.18 of Annex II of Directive 2006/87/EC, as amended by Directive 2008/87/EC.
- 3.3 The MCA has accordingly notified the European Commission, in accordance with Article 2.18 (5) of the Directive, that the RYA is the UK competent authority responsible for assigning and issuing unique European Vessel Identification Numbers (ENIs).

3.4 The RYA contact address for ENIs is:

Technical Department
RYA House
Ensign Way
Hamble
SO 31 4YA
UK
Tel: (local rate): 0845 345 0383
Tel: (national rate) 023 8060 4202
Email: technical@rya.org.uk

More Information

Vessel Standards Branch
Maritime and Coastguard Agency
Bay 2/29
Spring Place
105 Commercial Road
Southampton
SO15 1EG

Tel : +44 (0) 23 8032 9139
Fax : +44 (0) 23 8032 9104
e-mail: Shipping.Safety@mcga.gov.uk

General Inquiries: info@mcga.gov.uk

MCA Website Address: www.dft.gov.uk/mca

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