

Majority of Global SOLAS Fleet ECDIS Ready



The majority of the global SOLAS fleet is now compliant with the SOLAS regulations on ECDIS carriage, according to the latest data published by the United Kingdom Hydrographic Office (UKHO) at Posidonia. As of May 2016, 51% of all vessels that are subject to the SOLAS regulations on the mandatory carriage of ECDIS, including those that do not trade internationally, are now fully ECDIS ready.

This is an increase of 6% in the past six months. Furthermore, out of almost 42,000 internationally trading vessels, the UKHO now estimates that 59% are ECDIS ready, which is defined as using an ENC (Electronic Navigational Chart) service on ECDIS.

This represents an important step in the transition to digital navigation, as it is first time that over half of the global SOLAS fleet has been ECDIS ready.

Progress for Large Cargo Ships

The UKHO's data also provides an insight into ECDIS readiness for different ship sizes and classes. 77% of the 3,500 large cargo ships (defined as those over 50,000gt) in the global fleet are now ECDIS ready, ahead of the SOLAS-mandated deadline of 1 July 2016 for these vessels. This is an increase of 15% in the past six months.

By comparison, 45% of cargo ships over 20,000gt and 23% of cargo ships over 10,000 are currently using an ENC service. The respective SOLAS compliance dates for these two classes of vessel are July 2017 and July 2018.

UKHO data also shows that 78% of tankers are now ECDIS ready.

Greek Fleet Less Prepared

This latest data on ECDIS readiness was published at last week's Posidonia exhibition in Greece, where the UKHO had a strong presence, including a well-attended series of ECDIS seminars. According to the UKHO, 44% of Greek-operated SOLAS vessels are ECDIS ready, compared to the global figure of 51%. 77% of the Greek tanker fleet are ECDIS ready, in line with the global figure of 78%.

Support for Shipowners

The UKHO continues to offer support and assistance for ship owners at all stages of ECDIS implementation, including those still preparing for the installation of ECDIS and those managing the operation of ECDIS on their fleet. Over 4,000 shipping professionals in over 70 countries have attended the UKHO's ECDIS Seminars since 2011, most recently at Posidonia last week, with a focus on both 'Implementing ECDIS' and 'Living with ECDIS'.