

Health and Safety Legislation Consultation

Control of Artificial Optical Radiation at Work Regulations 2026

Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture

Rheynn Chymmyltaght, Bee as Eirinys,



Closes 31 Mar 2026

Opened 5 Dec 2025

Contact

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Overview

The Isle of Man (IOM) has jurisdiction over its territorial waters but currently does not have a comprehensive offshore health, safety, and environmental framework to regulate work activities offshore.

To address this gap, the Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture (DEFA) is reviewing and updating specific legislation to align with UK Health and Safety Executive (HSE) standards. This will enable offshore work to proceed under internationally recognised safety regulations, supporting future offshore energy developments.

To ensure consistent health and safety standards across both land and sea, the updated legislation will apply to work undertaken onshore and offshore within the Island and its territorial waters. This process has the added advantage of updating legislation in key areas to align with the latest UK legislation.

This consultation specifically relates to the following draft legislation:

- **Control of Artificial Optical Radiation at Work Regulations 2026**

Recognising the potential impact on IOM businesses, DEFA will implement a phased approach designed to give businesses sufficient time to prepare for compliance. Following public consultation and incorporation of any necessary amendments, the Department aims to submit the proposed legislation to Tynwald in early 2026, with a target commencement date of 1 Aug 2028.

DEFA welcomes stakeholder and public feedback on the updated and proposed health and safety legislation, and where appropriate any associated guidance documentation, through this public consultation process.

The end date for this consultation has been extended to 31st March 2026.

What these Regulations do

At present, the IOM does not have specific legislation addressing risks from artificial optical radiation (AOR) in the workplace. Employers are required to comply with general health and safety duties under the IOM **Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (as applied to the Island)** and the IOM **Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 2003**. These frameworks require risk assessments and preventive measures but do not provide targeted provisions for hazards such as laser radiation or high-intensity artificial light. This has left a gap in protection for workers who may be exposed to AOR.

The proposed IOM **Control of Artificial Optical Radiation at Work Regulations 2026** aim to close this gap by introducing a comprehensive regime for managing AOR risks. They

require employers to assess exposure levels, eliminate or reduce risks as far as reasonably practicable, and implement action plans if exposure exceeds defined limit values. The regulations also mandate information and training for employees, health surveillance where necessary, and apply these duties to certain activities within the territorial sea. Exposure limits and technical standards are based on international norms, ensuring consistency with best practice.

The proposed IOM regulations closely mirror the UK **Control of Artificial Optical Radiation at Work Regulations 2010** where the UK regulations implement EU Directive 2006/25/EC, which sets minimum health and safety requirements for worker exposure to AOR. Both frameworks share core principles: defining exposure limit values for non-coherent and laser radiation, requiring risk assessments, mandating technical and organisational measures to prevent overexposure, and providing for health surveillance and training. By adopting similar provisions the IOM will harmonize its approach with the UK.

Practical Implications of the Introduction of the 2026 Regulations

Practical implications of introducing the IOM **Control of Artificial Optical Radiation at Work Regulations 2026** are as follows:

1. New Compliance Duties for Employers

Employers will need to conduct specific risk assessments for artificial optical radiation (AOR) exposure. This is more detailed than general health and safety assessments and requires measuring or calculating exposure levels using international standards. Employers must also document findings and maintain records.

2. Technical and Organisational Changes

Where risks are identified, employers must implement engineering controls, such as shielding, interlocks, or alternative equipment emitting less radiation. Workstation design, maintenance programs, and limiting exposure duration will become mandatory considerations.

3. Training and Awareness

Where appropriate, employers will need to train staff on AOR risks, safe working practices, and correct use of personal protective equipment (PPE). This adds an ongoing training obligation beyond existing health and safety requirements.

4. Health Surveillance

For roles with significant exposure risk, employers must arrange health surveillance and medical examinations, maintain health records, and provide access to employees and regulators. This introduces additional administrative and occupational health costs.

5. Territorial Sea Application

The proposed IOM regulations extend to certain offshore activities, meaning employers operating in territorial waters must also comply, which could affect marine and energy sectors.

6. Alignment with UK Standards

Compliance will require adopting practices similar to those under the UK's 2010 regulations. This may simplify obligations for businesses operating in both jurisdictions but will require updates to IOM-specific policies and procedures.

Other legislation mentioned in the Legislation

- **The IOM Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974**
 - Regulation: Introductory section (enabling powers) and Regulation 1.
 - Purpose: Provides the legal authority for making these regulations under sections 15 and 82 and Schedule 3. It is the primary health and safety framework applied to the Isle of Man.
- **The IOM Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 2003**
 - Regulation: Regulation 3 (Interpretation), Regulation 5(1)(b), Regulation 6(2).
 - Purpose: Supplies the “general principles of prevention” in Schedule 2, which employers must follow when eliminating or reducing risks from AOR.
- **The IOM Health and Safety (Signs and Signals) Regulations 2026**
 - Regulation: Regulation 6(7)(b).
 - Purpose: Specifies signage requirements for areas where exposure exceeds limit values, ensuring proper warning and restricted access.
- **The IOM Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (Application to the Territorial Sea) Order 2026**
 - Regulation: Regulation 9.
 - Purpose: Extends the application of these regulations to activities in the territorial sea, aligning offshore safety obligations with onshore requirements.
- **The EU Directive 2006/25/EC**
 - Regulation: Regulation 3 (Interpretation) and Explanatory Note.
 - Purpose: Provides the basis for exposure limit values and technical standards for AOR, ensuring compliance with EU-derived health and safety norms.

Consultation Objectives

The following are the objectives of this consultation:

1. **Legislative alignment:**
Assess stakeholder support for aligning Manx health & safety legislation with UK standards, ensuring consistency and regulatory compatibility.
2. **Regulatory scope and clarity:**
Identify specific areas within health & safety regulation that may require additional focus, clarification, or enhancement to meet industry needs and best practices.
3. **Industry impact and readiness:**
Understand potential challenges for IOM-based businesses in adapting to the new framework, including operational, financial, or compliance-related concerns.
4. **Support mechanisms:**
Identify the support needs of stakeholders (e.g., guidance, training, transitional arrangements) to facilitate effective implementation and compliance with the new regime.
5. **Feedback on draft legislation:**
Collect stakeholder input on the draft legislative instruments for each stage of consultation.
6. **General feedback:**
 - Provide an open channel for additional comments, concerns, or suggestions to inform the development of a robust and responsive health & safety framework.

IOM Health & Safety at Work Inspectorate

When any new legislation is introduced, the Department is conscious of the need to ensure that the best guidance documentation is available. The current [IOM HSWI website](#) states the following:

- *“UK legislation and their associated codes of practice is best viewed as an illustration of good practice which may be helpful in explaining the general duties imposed by the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974”.*

Differences between UK HSE ACOPs and UK HSE Guidance

When referring to UK codes of practice, better known as “Approved Codes of Practice (ACOPs)” it is important to note and be aware of the differences between UK Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance and a UK HSE issued ACOP. UK HSE clarifies the differences here: [Legal status of HSE guidance and ACOPs](#).

When reading a UK HSE published ACOP, individuals and organisations should be aware of the presentation convention; which is normally explained within the documentation. A

common standard is that ACOP text is set out in bold, accompanying guidance in normal type, with the text of the actual Regulations in italics.

It should also be noted that whilst certain UK Regulations have an associated ACOP, others only have guidance. As an example, there is no longer an ACOP for the **UK Construction (Design and Management) Regulations (CDM) 2015**; it was replaced by guidance when the regulations were last updated.

Using UK HSE Guidance Documents with IOM legislation

When referring to UK ACOPs and guidance to assist with compliance of IOM legislation, individuals and organisations must be aware that whilst the intent is to align with the UK best practice, there may still be specific elements of the IOM legislation that are different to UK legislation. Examples being different paragraph and section/article numbering or elements of the UK legislation being omitted (e.g. if UK is referring to legislation not currently in place or applicable on the IOM).

Relevant UK ACOP or Guidance

Guidance Document	Type	Purpose
HSE 'Optical radiation – including ultraviolet radiation and lasers'	HSE Guidance	Legal overview and links to further resources
Employers' guidance on the Control of Artificial Optical Radiation at Work Regulations 2010 (PDF)	HSE Guidance	Practical compliance steps
UKHSA 'Laser radiation: safety advice'	UK HSA Guidance	Laser classification & safe-use standards
HSE 'Non-ionising radiation'	HSE Guidance	General non-ionising radiation overview

Summary

The proposed IOM **Control of Artificial Optical Radiation at Work Regulations 2026** will modernize workplace safety in the IOM by introducing clear rules for managing risks from artificial optical radiation. They require employers to assess and control exposure, provide training, and offer health surveillance where needed. These measures protect workers' eyes and skin, promote safer practices, and reduce long-term health risks.

By aligning with UK standards and international norms, the regulations create consistency for businesses operating across jurisdictions, simplify compliance, and demonstrate the Island's commitment to best practice. Overall, they strengthen worker protection, improve clarity for employers, and enhance the Island's reputation for high safety standards.

Reasonable adjustments and alternative formats

The Department is committed to equal opportunities and our aim is to make our documents easy to use and accessible to all. The Department will take steps to accommodate any reasonable adjustments and provide such assistance as may reasonably be required to enable access or reply to this consultation. If this document is required in another format or assistance is required with accessing or replying to this consultation, please email DEFAOffshore@gov.im.

Responding to this consultation and questions

This consultation can be responded to by clicking on the 'Online Survey' link below. Alternatively you can download a paper version of this consultation from the links on the consultation hub and email it to DEFAOffshore@gov.im or post it to:

The Offshore Team
Department of Environment Food and Agriculture,
Regulation Directorate,
Thie Slieau Whallian, Foxdale Road, St Johns, Isle of Man, IM4 3AS.

About you

1. Which option best describes your interest in responding to this consultation?

- ☐ Member of public
- ☐ Isle of Man Government
- ☐ Business owner or Stakeholder
- ☐ Member of Tynwald
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Other:

2. Are you responding on behalf of an organisation or industry?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Organisation / industry:

Number of people or organisations represented:

3. Are you happy for us to contact you regarding your response if we need to?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If yes then please add your name and contact email address.

Name:

Email:

4. May we publish your response?

Please read our Privacy Policy for more details and your rights.

More Information:

- **Publish in full** – your organisation name, or the industry you represent, along with full answers will be published on the hub (your email will not be published)
- **Publish anonymously** – only your responses will be published on the hub (your organisation name, or the industry you represent, and email will not be published)
- **Do not publish** – nothing will be published publically on the hub (your response will only be part of a larger summary response document)

(An answer is required)

- ☐ Yes, you can publish my response in full
- ☐ Yes, you may publish my response anonymously
- ☐ No, please do not publish my response

Consultation Questions

1. Do you agree that the Isle of Man should follow UK standards and processes for health and safety laws and its regulation?
(Yes/No – Please tell us why you agree or disagree).
2. Are there any parts of the legislation being consulted upon that require more clarity to aid understanding and assist with compliance?
(Yes/No – If yes, please tell us which areas and why).
3. Is the proposed implementation strategy and timescale for the introduction of the IOM **Control of Artificial Optical Radiation at Work Regulations 2026** appropriate for industry readiness?
(Yes/No – Please add any comments you may have).
4. Are there any specific support mechanisms (e.g., guidance, training, transitional arrangements) that would help you or your organisation prepare for the new legislation?
(Yes/No – If yes, please tell us what kind of support would be most helpful).
- Do you have any other comments on the draft IOM **Control of Artificial Optical Radiation at Work Regulations 2026** legislation at this stage of the overall consultation process?
(Comment Box)
5. Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about the proposed changes or the consultation process?
(Comment Box)