

Health and Safety Legislation Consultation

Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 2025

Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture

Rheynn Chymmyltaght, Bee as Eirynys,



Closes 31 Mar 2026
Opened 31st Oct 2025

Contact

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Overview

The Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture (DEFA) is reviewing and updating specific legislation to align with UK best practice. This consultation continues the process of updating IOM Health and Safety legislation and refers directly to the following draft legislation:

- **Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 2025**

This legislative reform also aims to ensure health and safety standards applies consistently to both onshore and offshore activities and in the process support the safe development of future offshore energy projects.

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 Oct 2026.

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 Regulation do

The draft **Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 2025** are designed to introduce a comprehensive and standalone legal framework for the use of safety signs and signals in workplaces across the Isle of Man. The draft Regulations are based on the UK's **Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996**. The UK regulations have provided detailed standards for visual, acoustic, and verbal safety communications, but the IOM has not previously had an equivalent dedicated regulation.

Currently, the IOM relies on general duties under the **Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974** and the **Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 2003**. These instruments require employers to assess risks and implement control measures but do not provide specific guidance on the use, design, or maintenance of safety signs.

The new **Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 2025** will align the Island's approach with UK and international standards, ensuring clarity, consistency, and improved workplace safety through regulated signage practices. The legislation includes transitional provisions specific to the Island, such as a two-year grace period for existing fire safety signs. (Regulation 7).

How do these Regulations compare with the current UK Legislation?

The draft IOM **Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 2025** closely mirror the UK's **Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996**, which remain the current legislation in force in the UK. Both sets of regulations share the same structure, terminology, and technical standards for safety signage.

The IOM draft Regulations align with the UK framework very closely, including provisions for signboards, safety colours, illuminated signs, acoustic signals, verbal communication, and hand signals. They also incorporate the same minimum requirements for design, placement, and maintenance of signs. Additionally, the IOM draft Regulations refer to the same British Standards (e.g. BS 7121 and BS 6736) for alternative hand signals.

Practical Implications

For Employers:

- **Risk-Based Duty to Provide Signs:** Employers must provide safety signs only where risks cannot be adequately reduced by other means, as determined by a formal risk assessment under the current IOM **Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 2003**.
- **Compliance with Technical Standards:** Signs must meet detailed design and usage requirements set out in the Schedule 1, including colour coding, shape, visibility, and placement.
- **Maintenance Obligations:** Employers must ensure that signs and signalling devices are regularly cleaned, checked, repaired, and replaced as needed to maintain effectiveness.
- **Training Requirements:** Employers must provide employees with suitable and sufficient instruction and training on the meaning and use of safety signs (Regulation 6).
- **Use of Recognised Standards:** Where hand signals are used, they must conform to those described in Schedule 1 or recognised alternatives listed in Schedule 2 (e.g. BS 7121 for cranes).
- **Transitional Period:** Employers may continue using existing fire safety signs for up to two years after the Regulations come into force (Regulation 7), allowing time for phased replacement.

For Employees:

- **Improved Clarity and Safety:** Employees will benefit from clearer, standardised safety signage that enhances awareness of hazards and emergency procedures.
- **Training and Awareness:** Workers will receive formal instruction on the meaning of signs and the actions required, improving safety culture and compliance.

For Inspectors and Regulators:

- **Clear Enforcement Framework:** The Regulations provide a structured basis for assessing compliance with signage duties, including technical specifications and training standards.
- **Consistency with UK Practice:** Enforcement will align with UK standards facilitating cross-jurisdictional understanding and reducing ambiguity.

What other Legislation is referred to within the Draft IOM Regulations?**The UK Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974**

- Referenced in Regulation 1 (enabling powers), Regulation 3 (Interpretation), Regulation 4 (Application).
- Purpose: Provides the legal foundation for the Regulations, as applied to the Isle of Man via the IOM's Health and Safety at Work Order 2024.

The IOM Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 2003

- Referenced in Regulation 5(4), Explanatory Note.
- Purpose: Risk assessments under these Regulations determine when safety signs must be provided.

The UK Offshore Installations (Prevention of Fire and Explosion, and Emergency Response) Regulations 1995 (SD 274/95)

- Referenced in Regulation 5(4)
- Purpose: Sets additional signage requirements for offshore installations, particularly fire safety signs.

The IOM Road Traffic Regulation Act 1985

- Referenced in Regulation 5(6) (final paragraph).
- Purpose: Requires use of prescribed traffic signs in workplaces where traffic risks exist.

UK/EU: CLP Regulation – Regulation (EC) No 1272/2008

- Referenced in Regulation 3 (Interpretation), Schedule 1 Part III.
- Purpose: Defines hazard pictograms and labelling requirements for chemical substances and mixtures.

UK/EU: European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR)

- Referenced in Regulation 3 (Interpretation)
- Purpose: Defines “dangerous goods” for the purposes of exclusions under Regulation 4.

The IOM Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (Application to the Territorial Sea) Order 2025

- Referenced in Regulation 4 (Application)
- Purpose: Extends the application of the Regulations to certain offshore activities within the territorial sea.

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.

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

The UK HSE **guidance** relevant to the IOM **Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 2025** can be found here:

- **L64 – Safety Signs and Signals Guidance (June 2015)**
 - [Safety signs and signals. The Health and Safety Regulations 1996 \(L64\)](#)
- **HSE Feature Pages on Safety Signs**

- Overview of sign types, regulatory context, and statutory duties:
- [Safety signs – HSE](#)
- [Safety signs – HSE \(alternative workplace context\)](#)

Summary

The IOM **Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 2025**, set out legal duties for employers to provide and maintain appropriate safety signs in workplaces where risks cannot be eliminated or adequately reduced by other means. The Regulations define various types of signs; including signboards, illuminated signs, acoustic signals, hand signals, and verbal communication and require that they conform to minimum standards detailed in Schedule 1.

Employers must ensure signs are visible, comprehensible, properly maintained, and supported by emergency power where needed. The Regulations also mandate that employees receive suitable instruction and training on the meaning and use of safety signs. Transitional provisions allow existing fire safety signs to remain in use for two years after the Regulations come into force.

Why your views matter

This consultation gives stakeholders, industry, and the public the chance to provide feedback on the proposed “draft Regulations”. Your views will help ensure that the legislation is clear, practical, and effective in protecting workers’ health.

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 **Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 2025** 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).*
5. Do you have any other comments on the draft **Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 2025** legislation attached to this stage of the overall consultation process?
(Comment Box)
6. Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about the proposed changes or the consultation process?
(Comment Box)