



# SHIP SAFETY BULLETIN

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## **SUBJECT: DECK WATCH REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL CANADIAN & FOREIGN VESSELS, INCLUDING TUG BOATS OPERATING IN WATERS UNDER CANADIAN JURISDICTION**

### **Scope:**

This Ship Safety Bulletin applies to **all** vessels, including tug boats operating in waters under Canadian jurisdiction.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this Ship Safety Bulletin is to remind all foreign and Canadian vessels owners and operators of the deck watch requirements which are to be observed on their vessels, as stipulated by the *Marine Personnel Regulations* (MPR).

Subject to Section 216 (2) (b) of the MPR, on a vessel of at least 5 gross tonnage, the **deck watch shall consist of an additional person** assisting the person in charge of the deck watch.

This aspect is further substantiated by Chapter VIII Part 4-1 (16) of the *International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers* (STCW Convention) in which the officer in charge of the navigational watch may be **the sole lookout only in daylight** under certain conditions (see **important note**).

### **Background**

This Ship Safety Bulletin is issued in response to clarification sought from the marine sector as a result of tug & barge incidents in Canadian waters.

### **Keywords:**

1. Additional person
2. Deck Watch
3. Tugs
3. Marine Personnel Regulations

### **Questions concerning this Bulletin should be addressed to:**

AMSP  
Marine Personnel Standards

Transport Canada  
Tower C, Place de Ville  
330 Sparks Street, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0N8

**Contact us at:** [marinesafety-securitemaritime@tc.gc.ca](mailto:marinesafety-securitemaritime@tc.gc.ca) or 1-855-859-3123 (Toll Free).

## Important Note

Vessel operators are reminded of **Section 216** and **Section 213** of the *Marine Personnel Regulations* (MPR):

- **Section 216** sets out that the deck watch shall consist of **at least** the following persons:
  - (a) a person in charge of the deck watch who holds an appropriate certificate of competency and a radio operator certificate;
  - (b) except for certain exceptions specified in section 216 of the MPR, if the vessel is 5 gross tonnage or more, an additional person. This person must hold, if the vessel is at least 500 gross tonnage, a Bridge Watch Rating certificate or an Able Seafarer certificate;
  - (c) except for certain exceptions specified in section 216 of the MPR if the vessel is of more than 1 000 gross tonnage and is not securely anchored in port or securely moored to shore, a second additional person who holds, at a minimum, a Bridge Watch Rating or an Able Seafarer certificate.

The authorized representative is responsible to ensure the vessel complies with its safe manning document.

- **Section 213** of the *Marine personnel regulations* (MPR) specifies that the master of a vessel shall ensure that its intended voyage is planned and that a deck watch is maintained in accordance with Parts 2, 3 and 3-1 (**now Part 4-1** after the 2010 Manila amendments) of section A-VIII/2 of the STCW Code. In particular, Part 4-1 (16) allows the officer in charge of the navigational watch to be the sole lookout **only in daylight**, provided that, on each such occasion:

1. The situation has been carefully assessed and it has been established without doubt that it is safe to do so;
2. Full account has been taken of all relevant factors, including, but not limited to:
  - state of weather;
  - visibility;
  - traffic density;
  - proximity of dangers to navigation;
  - the attention necessary when navigating in or near traffic separation schemes.
3. Assistance is immediately available to be summoned to the bridge when any change in the situation so requires.

## Foreign vessels

Equivalent requirements are specified in Part 2, **Division 4** sections 244 to 247 included, of the *Marine Personnel Regulations* for foreign vessels in Canadian waters.

## Conclusions

The existing TCMSS acts and regulations make constant reference to the ongoing requirements related to the safe vessel operations to prevent incidents.

Relevant **Divisions** of the *Marine Personnel Regulations* **Part 2, Division 2** (Canadian Vessels), and **Division 4** (Foreign Vessels), emphasize the necessity of maintaining a minimum complement and using a qualified member of the crew as a back-up.

You can find these requirements online at <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/sor-2007-115/>.

## References

- *Canada Shipping Act*, 2001;
- *Marine Personnel Regulations*, Part 2, Divisions 2 and 4;
- *International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers*.