



SHIP SAFETY BULLETIN

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Subject: Safe operation of commercial passenger vessels

Scope

This Ship Safety Bulletin applies to all vessel owners, authorized representatives and operators of Canadian commercial passenger vessels.

Purpose

The purpose of this bulletin is to remind vessel owners, authorized representatives and operators of commercial passenger vessels that they must "...develop procedures for the safe operation of the vessel and for dealing with emergencies."

This requirement comes from the [Canada Shipping Act, 2001, Part 4, paragraph 106\(1\)\(b\)](#).

When developing these procedures, authorized representatives are reminded to:

- identify, among other safety and environmental factors, areas and conditions conducive to the formation of hazardous waves
- adopt practical risk mitigation strategies to reduce the chances that a passenger vessel will encounter such conditions

Background

Incidents involving commercial passenger vessels, such as the Leviathan II, BC Ferries Queen of the North and sport fishing vessel Catatonic, resulted in loss of life. This shows the need for improved marine safety oversight for passenger vessel operations to prevent accidents.

Keywords:

1. Safety Assessment
2. Emergencies
3. Commercial passenger vessel

Questions concerning this Bulletin should be addressed to:

AMSEC
Navigation Safety and Radiocommunication
613-991-3134

Transport Canada
Marine Safety and Security
Tower C, Place de Ville
330 Sparks Street, 10th Floor
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0N8

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

Important note: safety assessment

Vessel operators, owners and authorized representatives should conduct a safety assessment prior to departure.

The safe operation of a vessel during emergency situations includes (but is not limited to):

- thoroughly examining prevailing weather
- monitoring the weather forecast for the duration of the voyage
- identifying:
 - hazardous areas that should be avoided
 - shallow areas where any dangerous or unpredictable (“rogue” or “freak”) waves could be encountered on the planned route
- making arrangements with a contact person on shore who can respond to emergencies
- having reliable, functional communication and navigation equipment that can be used in an emergency
- preparing a voyage plan
- following planned routes
- communicating any changes to the original voyage plan with the contact person on shore