

# WATCH-KEEPING ON VESSELS

## THE IMPORTANCE OF PROPER WATCH-KEEPING

SAMSA recently released their findings on a few vessel collisions and incidents at sea. Of these findings, they reported that during their investigations, they found that most accidents at sea are caused by the lack of watch-keeping on vessels, especially at night and when visibility is restricted.

This purposes of this communication is to emphasis and remind sea going staff of the importance of proper watch-keeping duties while at sea.

Our law refers to 3 types of watch keeping, **NAVIGATIONAL, RADIO and ENGINEERING** watch-keeping. The general rules for watch keeping on all fishing vessels are the following:

- The skipper of every fishing vessel shall ensure that watch-keeping arrangements are adequate for maintaining a safe navigational watch;
- The chief engineer officer of every fishing vessel shall ensure that watch-keeping arrangements are adequate to maintain a safe engineering watch;
- The watch system shall be such that the efficiency of watch-keeping personnel is not impaired by fatigue, and that relieving watches are sufficiently rested and otherwise fit for duty.

The table below illustrate the most important duties of various watch keeping practices.

<b>NAVIGATIONAL WATCHKEEPING</b>	<b>ENGINEERING WATCHKEEPING</b>
<p>The officer in charge of the navigational watch shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• keep the watch on the bridge;</li><li>• check position and speed of the vessel frequent intervals;</li><li>• have full knowledge of the location and operation of all safety and navigational equipment on board the ship;</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The officer in charge of the engineering watch is the chief engineer officer's representative and is primarily responsible at all times for the safe and efficient operation and upkeep of machinery;</li><li>• The officer in charge of the engineering watch shall ensure that the established watch-keeping arrangements are</li></ul>

- not be assigned or undertake any duties that would interfere with the safe navigation of the ship;
- shall keep proper records of the movements and activities relating to the navigation of the ship;
- all times ensure that a proper look-out is maintained

Every vessel shall at all times maintain a proper look-out by sight and hearing as well as by all available means appropriate in the prevailing circumstances and conditions so as to avoid the situation and of the risk of a collision.

The officer in charge of the navigational watch shall notify the Master immediately—

- if restricted visibility is encountered or expected;
- if the traffic conditions or the movements of other ships are causing concern;
- if difficulty is experienced in maintaining course;
- on failure to sight land, a navigation mark or to obtain soundings by the expected time;
- if, unexpectedly, a land or a navigation mark is sighted or a change in soundings occurs;
- on breakdown of the engines, propulsion machinery remote control, steering gear or any essential navigational equipment, alarm or indicator;
- if the radio equipment malfunctions;

maintained and that if forming part of the engineering watch, assist in the safe and efficient operation of the vessel's propulsion machinery and auxiliary equipment.

- All members of the engineering watch shall be familiar with their assigned watch-keeping duties;
- Have knowledge of the vessels safety systems equipment and procedures;

The officer in charge of the engineering watch shall notify the chief engineer officer without delay—

- when engine damage or a malfunction occurs that may be such as to endanger the safe operation of the vessel;
- when any malfunction occurs that, it is believed, may cause damage or breakdown of propulsion machinery, auxiliary machinery or monitoring and governing systems; and
- in any emergency or if in any doubt about what decision or measures to take.
- the officer in charge of the engineering watch shall not hesitate to take immediate action for the safety of the vessel, its machinery and crew where circumstances requires

#### HANDOVER of WATCH

The officer in charge of the watch-keeping shall not hand over the watch to the relieving officer if there is reason to believe that the

(h) in heavy weather.

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The officer in charge of the watch-keeping shall not hand over the watch to the relieving officer if there is reason to believe that the latter is obviously not capable of carrying out the watchkeeping duties effectively.

Operational tests of shipboard navigational equipment shall be carried out at sea as frequently as practicable possible as well as before port arrival and departure.

The automatic pilot is to be tested manually at least once a trip, including that the navigation, signal lights, radio equipment and other navigational equipment is functioning properly.

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#### **RADIO WATCH**

The Master shall ensure that an adequate radio watch is maintained while the vessel is at sea, on appropriate frequencies, taking into account the requirements of the radio regulations.