

CLUB CIRCULAR

Friday, 8 November, 2013
BSM-RM-10/006/13

To: All members

Recommendations for the Safety of Cargo Vessel of less than Convention Size Part I / IV

Dear Sirs

Cargo vessels of less than 500 Gross Tonnage (except vessels down to 300 GT with respect to radio-communication) are not covered by the SOLAS Convention, and there exist no uniform regulations or guidance that provides an internationally accepted level of safety for such vessels. Smaller vessels due to a combination of their size and constant exposure to coastal hazards are particularly vulnerable and therefore careful consideration should be given to all aspects of their safety.

The purpose of these Recommendations is to provide a generally applicable safe practice in particular for fire protection, detection and extinction; safety equipment, radio installations and navigational equipment. Fishing vessels are not part of these Recommendations.

1. Load Line Recommendations

For vessels greater than 24 metres in length, the requirements set forth in LL Convention 1966 (LLC 66), as amended, should be met. Unless specified otherwise by the Administration, vessels of less than 24 metres in length, should comply with the relevant conditions of assignment and the assignment of freeboard, as specified in the International Load Line Convention 1966, as amended, as far as practicable.

2. Stability Recommendations

The following IMO Resolutions should be applied to vessels greater than 24m in length - The 2008 Intact Stability Code (IMO Resolution MSC.267(85)) The Requirements, if any, of the Administration, should be taken into consideration. Due regard should also be paid to particulars of either the vessel concerned or

its cargo, for assessing, whether additional or amended criteria need to be applied.

3. Life Saving Appliance Recommendations

The minimum Recommendations for the carriage of life saving equipment is specified in the table below unless specified otherwise by the Administration. The equipment specified in the table below, should comply with the IMO Life Saving Appliances Code or specified otherwise by the Administration.

Life Saving Appliance	Unrestricted	Restricted	Protected
All cargo vessels excluding tankers, chemical tankers and gas carriers should be provided with liferafts on each side of the vessel capable of accommodating the total number of persons on board.	X*1)	X*1)	X*2)
Oil tankers, chemical tankers and gas carriers carrying cargoes having a flashpoint not exceeding 60oC (closed-cup test), not engaged on International voyages, should be provided with totally enclosed fire protected lifeboats capable of accommodating the total number of persons on board on each side of the vessel or a single free-fall lifeboat.	X	X	X
Chemical tankers and gas carriers, not engaged on International voyages, carrying cargoes emitting toxic vapours or gases should carry lifeboats as above with the addition of a self contained air support system.	X	X	X
Oil tankers, chemical tankers and gas carriers, not engaged on International voyages, should in addition be provided with life-rafts for 200% of the persons on board in the case of a free-fall lifeboat or 100% in the case of davit launched lifeboats which should be capable of being launched on each side of	X	X	X

the vessel.			
All cargo vessels should be provided with a rescue boat and launching appliance, a lifeboat may be accepted as a rescue boat provided that it also complies with the Recommendations for a R.B.	-X if L > 20m -X*3) if L ≤ 20m	X*3)	-
A satellite EPIRB complying with GMDSS Requirements, appropriate to the sea area within which the vessel operates.	X	X*4)	X*4)
A radar transponder complying with GMDSS Requirements.	X	X	-
At least 2 two-way portable VHF radiotelephone apparatus complying with GMDSS requiring	X	X	-
A minimum of 6 lifebuoys, 2 fitted with a self-activating smoke and light signal, 2 with a self-igniting light and 2 with a buoyant lifeline.	X	X	X
A lifejacket for each of the persons onboard, and in addition a minimum of two lifejackets for persons on watch. All life jackets should be fitted with an approved lifejacket light.	X	X	X
An immersion suit to be provided for each person on board, which may include those provided for the rescue boat crew.	X*5)+6)	X*5)+6)	X*5)+6)
Rocket parachute flares.	12	12	6
Line-throwing apparatus.	1	1	-
General emergency alarm.	X	X*7)	X*7)
Muster lists, operating instruction etc. as applicable	X	X*8)	X*8)

Notes:

Unrestricted service means a vessel engaged on International voyages, and not bounded by any limitations on operating environment.

Restricted Service:

(a) Specified coastal service. Service along a coast the geographical limits of which should be defined and for a distance out to sea generally not exceeding 20 nautical miles, unless some other distance is specified for 'coastal service' by the Administration with which the vessel is registered, or by the Administration of the coast off which it is operating.

(b) Specified operating or service areas. Service between two or more ports or other geographical features, or service within a defined geographical area such as: "Red Sea Service", "Piraeus to Thessaloniki and Islands within the Aegean Sea".

Protected Service:

(a) Protected water service. Service in sheltered water adjacent to sand banks, reefs, breakwaters to other coastal features, in sheltered waters between islands and lagoons.

(b) Extended protected water service. Service in protected waters and also short distances (generally less than 15 nautical miles) beyond protected waters in 'reasonable weather'.

1) If such liferafts cannot be readily transferred for launching on either side of the vessel, then liferafts capable of accommodating 150% the total number of persons on board should, where practicable considering vessel's size, be provided on each side.

The arrangement should be such that in the event of failure or loss of any one liferaft, sufficient liferafts remain, on each side of the vessel capable of accommodating the total number of persons on board.

All liferafts should be provided with a hydrostatic or similar automatic release to enable the liferafts to float free in the event of the vessel sinking.

2) Vessels operating within the extended protected waters should, where practicable, be provided with liferafts on each side.

Vessels operating within protected waters should, where practicable, be provided with at least one liferaft capable of accommodating the total number of persons on board. Craft of 24 m or less may be provided with buoyant apparatus or additional lifebuoys (1 per 2 persons) in place of liferafts.

3) Wherever practicable vessels should be provided with a rescue boat or on smaller vessels a suitable inflated boat with engine, however, the design and operational Recommendations of some vessels such as small tugs may preclude this.

4) If the vessel operates within an area designated as A1 a VHF EPIRB may be provided in place of the satellite EPIRB in accordance with GMDSS recommendations.

5) Immersion suits and thermal protective aids may be omitted on vessels operating permanently between the latitudes 20°N and 20°S or within other defined areas where water temperatures and climatic conditions are satisfactory to the administration.

- 6) Each person assigned to crew the rescue boat, including combined lifeboat/rescueboats, should be provided with an immersion suit. Where totally enclosed lifeboats and/or davit launched liferafts are provided a minimum of 3 immersion suits should be provided. Vessels provided with throw overboard liferafts should be provided with immersion suits for each person on board, which may include those provided for the rescue boat crew, unless exempted by 5) above or especially protected service. Thermal protective aids should be provided in accordance with SOLAS Requirements where they form part of a lifeboat and liferaft equipment.
- 7) General emergency alarm may be omitted where the design of the vessel is such as to make it unnecessary.
- 8) The extent to which such notices are required and can be posted is dependent upon the size and type of vessel.

4. Radio Installations

The minimum Recommendations for the radio installations should be as given in the table below unless specified otherwise by the Flag Administration.

Radio Installations	Unrestricted	Restricted	Protected
GMDSS Requirements as contained in SOLAS IV as amended, appropriate to the sea area involved, A1, A2, A3 and A4, should apply to all vessels 300 GT and above regardless of service area and to all vessels regardless of size engaged on unrestricted service.	X	X	X
Vessels engaged on restricted service should comply as above when 300 GT and above, for vessels less than 300 GT GMDSS Requirements appropriate to the sea area involved should be complied with unless otherwise specified by the Administration.	-	X	-
Vessels engaged on protected service should comply as above when 300 GT and above, for vessels less than 300 GT GMDSS Requirements	-	-	X

appropriate to the sea area involved should be complied with unless otherwise specified by the Administration.			
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5. Navigational Equipment

The Requirements, as specified in SOLAS 1974, as amended, Chapter V, as applicable based on ship's size, should be complied with unless the Flag Administration specifies otherwise.

6. Prevention of Collisions

The Requirements, as specified by the Convention on International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREG, 1972) as amended, should be complied with.

To be continued...

If our valued member has any doubt, please contact our Risk Management Department at riskmanagement@britishsteamship.com.

Yours faithfully

British Steamship Management Limited

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