

PART 3-2 - GUIDANCE ON KEEPING AN ENGINEERING WATCH

6 Particular guidance may be necessary for special types of propulsion systems or ancillary equipment and for ships carrying hazardous, dangerous, toxic or highly flammable materials or other special types of cargo. The chief engineer officer should provide this operational guidance as appropriate.

7 It is essential that officers in charge of the engineering watch appreciate that the efficient performance of engineering watchkeeping duties is necessary in the interest of the safety of life and property at sea and of preventing pollution of the marine environment.

8 The relieving officer, before assuming charge of the engineering watch, should:

- .1 be familiar with the location and use of the equipment provided for the safety of life in a hazardous or toxic environment;
- .2 ascertain that materials for the administration of emergency medical first aid are readily available, particularly those required for the treatment of burns and scalds; and
- .3 when in port, safely anchored or moored, be aware of:
 - .3.1 cargo activities, the status of maintenance and repair functions and all other operations affecting the watch, and
 - .3.2 the auxiliary machinery in use for passenger or crew accommodation services, cargo operations, operational water supplies and exhaust systems.

PART 3-3 - GUIDANCE ON KEEPING A RADIO WATCH

General

9 Among other things, the Radio Regulations require that each ship radio station is licensed, is under the ultimate authority of the master or other person responsible for the ship and is only operated under the control of adequately qualified personnel. The Radio Regulations also require that a distress alert shall only be sent on the authority of the master or other person responsible for the ship.

10 The master should bear in mind that all personnel assigned responsibility for sending a distress alert must be instructed with regard to, be knowledgeable of, and be able to operate properly, all radio equipment on the ship as required by regulation 1/14, paragraph 1.4. This should be recorded in the deck or radio log-book.

Watchkeeping

11 In addition to the requirements concerning radiowatchkeeping, the master of every seagoing ship should ensure that:

- .1 the ship's radio station is adequately manned for the purpose of exchanging general communications - in particular public correspondence, taking into account the constraints imposed by the duties of those authorized to operate it; and

- .2 the radio equipment provided on board and, where fitted, the reserve sources of energy, are maintained in an efficient working condition.

12 Necessary instruction and information on use of radio equipment and procedures for distress and safety purposes should be given periodically to all relevant crew members by the person designated in the muster list to have primary responsibility for radiocommunications during distress incidents. This should be recorded in the radio log.

13 The master of every ship not subject to the SOLAS Convention should require that radio watchkeeping is adequately maintained as determined by the Administration, taking into account the Radio Regulations.

Operational

14 Prior to sailing, the radio operator designated as having primary responsibility for radiocommunications during distress incidents should ensure that:

- .1 all distress and safety radio equipment and the reserve source of energy are in an efficient working condition, and that this is recorded in the radio log;
- .2 all documents required by international agreement, notices to ship radio stations and additional documents required by the Administration are available and are corrected in accordance with the latest supplements, and that any discrepancy is reported to the master;
- .3 the radio clock is correctly set against standard time signals;
- .4 antennae are correctly positioned, undamaged and properly connected; and
- .5 to the extent practicable, routine weather and navigational warning messages for the area in which the ship will be navigating are updated together with those for other areas requested by the master, and that such messages are passed to the master.

15 On sailing and opening the station, the radio operator on watch should:

- .1 listen on the appropriate distress frequencies for any possible existing distress situation; and
- .2 send a traffic report (name, position and destination, etc.) to the local coast station and any other appropriate coast station from which general communications may be expected.

16 While the station is open, the radio operator on watch should:

- .1 check the radio clock against standard time signals at least once a day;
- .2 send a traffic report when entering and on leaving the service area of a coast station from which general communications might be expected; and
- .3 transmit reports to ship reporting systems in accordance with the instructions of the master.

17 While at sea, the radio operator designated as having primary responsibility for radiocommunications during distress incidents should ensure the proper functioning of:

- 1 the Digital Selective Calling (DSC) distress and safety radio equipment by means of a test call at least once each week; and
- 2 the distress and safety radio equipment by means of a test at least once each day but without radiating any signal.

The results of these tests should be recorded in the radio log.

18 The radio operator designated to handle general communications should ensure that an effective watch is maintained on those frequencies on which communications are likely to be exchanged, having regard to the position of the ship in relation to those coast stations and to coast earth stations from which traffic may be expected. When exchanging traffic, radio operators should follow the relevant ITU recommendations.

19 When closing the station on arrival at a port, the radio operator on watch should advise the local coast station and other coast stations with which contact has been maintained of the ship's arrival and of the closing of the station.

20 When closing the radio station the radio operator designated as having primary responsibility for radiocommunications during distress incidents should:

- 1 ensure that transmitting antennae are earthed; and
- 2 check that the reserve sources of energy are sufficiently charged.

Distress alerts and procedures

21 The distress alert or distress call has absolute priority over all other transmissions. All stations which receive such signals are required by the Radio Regulations to immediately cease all transmissions capable of interfering with distress communications.

22 In the case of a distress affecting own ship, the radio operator designated as having primary responsibility for radiocommunications during distress incidents should immediately assume responsibility for following the procedures of the Radio Regulations and relevant ITU-R Recommendations.

23 On receiving a distress alert:

- 1 the radio operator on watch should alert the master and, if appropriate, the radio operator designated as having primary responsibility for radiocommunications during distress incidents; and
- 2 the radio operator designated as having primary responsibility for radiocommunications during distress incidents should evaluate the situation and immediately assume responsibility for following the procedures of the Radio Regulations and relevant ITU-R Recommendations.

Urgency messages

24 In cases of urgency affecting own ship, the radio operator designated as having responsibility for radiocommunications during distress incidents should immediately assume responsibility for following the procedures of the Radio Regulations and relevant ITU-R Recommendations.

25 In cases of communications relating to medical advice, the radio operator designated as having primary responsibility for radiocommunications during distress incidents should follow the procedures of the Radio Regulations and adhere to the conditions as published in the relevant international documentation (see paragraph 14.2) or as specified by the satellite service provider.

26 In cases of communications relating to medical transports, as defined in the Annex 1 to the Protocol additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 relating to the protection of victims of international armed conflicts (Protocol 1), the radio operator designated as having primary responsibility for radiocommunication during distress incidents should follow the procedures of the Radio Regulations.

27 On receiving an urgency message, the radio operator on watch should alert the master and, if appropriate, the radio operator designated as having primary responsibility for radiocommunications during distress incidents.

Safety messages

28 When a safety message is to be transmitted, the master and the radio operator on watch should follow the procedures of the Radio Regulations.

29 On receiving a safety message, the radio operator on watch should note its content and act in accordance with the master's instructions.

30 Bridge-to-bridge communications should be exchanged on VHF channel 13. Bridge-to-bridge communications are described as "Intership Navigation Safety Communications" in the Radio Regulations.

Radio records

31 Additional entries in the radio log should be made in accordance with paragraphs 10, 12, 14, 17 and 33.

32 Unauthorized transmissions and incidents of harmful interference should, if possible, be identified, recorded in the radio log and brought to the attention of the Administration in compliance with the Radio Regulations, together with an appropriate extract from the radio log.

Battery maintenance

33 Batteries providing a source of energy for any part of the radio installation including those associated with uninterrupted power supplies are the responsibility of the radio operator designated as having primary responsibility for radiocommunications during distress incidents and should be:

- 1 tested on-load and off-load daily and, where necessary, brought up to the fully charged condition;

- .2 tested once per week by means of a hydrometer where practicable, or where a hydrometer cannot be used, by a suitable load test; and
- .3 checked once per month for the security of each battery and its connections and the condition of the batteries and their compartment or compartments.

The results of these tests should be recorded in the radio log.

PART 4 - GUIDANCE ON WATCHKEEPING IN PORT

(No provisions)

PART 5 - GUIDANCE ON PREVENTION OF DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE

34 Drug and alcohol abuse directly affect the fitness and ability of a seafarer to perform watchkeeping duties. Seafarers found to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol should not be permitted to perform watchkeeping duties until they are no longer impaired in their ability to perform those duties.

35 Administrations should consider developing national legislation:

- .1 prescribing a maximum of 0.08% blood alcohol level (BAC) during watchkeeping duty as a minimum safety standard on their ships; and
- .2 prohibiting the consumption of alcohol within 4 hours prior to serving as a member of a watch.

Drug and alcohol abuse screening programme guidelines

36 The Administration should ensure that adequate measures are taken to prevent alcohol and drugs from impairing the ability of watchkeeping personnel, and should establish screening programmes as necessary which:

- .1 identify drug and alcohol abuse;
- .2 respect the dignity, privacy, confidentiality and fundamental legal rights of the individuals concerned; and
- .3 take into account relevant international guidelines.