



№ 9/CIRC/FSI

2021 / 05 /20

To: All Owners, Managers and Representatives of Ships flying Georgia Flag, Masters and Officers, Recognized Organizations, Flag State Inspectors, Recognized Agents.

Subject : Principles of Watchkeeping

Reference:

- International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) as amended;
- International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), 1974, as amended;
- COLREG, International Regulations for preventing Collisions at Sea, 1972;
- IMO Assembly Resolution A.893(21), Guidelines For Voyage Planning, adopted 25 November 1999;
- Maritime Code of Georgia;
- Law of Georgia on “Seafarers Education and Certification”;
- Technical Regulation of the Government of Georgia “Minimum Safe Manning Requirements for Ships Flying the Georgian Flag”.

1. Introduction:

1.1 Ship Owners, Managers and Representatives of Ships flying Georgia Flag, masters, chief engineer officers and all watchkeeping personnel to the requirements, principles and guidance set out in the STCW Code which shall be observed to ensure that a safe continuous watch or watches appropriate to the prevailing circumstances and conditions are maintained on all seagoing ships at all times.

2. Purpose:

2.1 The purpose of this circular, is to provide and remind ship owners, operators, managers, masters, officers and all watchkeeping personnel for the general principle of watchkeeping and ensure watchkeeping arrangements, adequate for maintaining a safe watch or watches, taking into account the prevailing circumstances and conditions and that, under the master’s general direction.

3. Application:

3.1 The regulation applies to all ships registered in the State Register of Ships of Georgia.

4. General Watchkeeping Principles:

4.1 Watches shall be carried out based on the following bridge and engine-room resource management principles:

- Proper arrangements for watchkeeping personnel shall be ensured in accordance with the situations;
- Any limitation in qualifications or fitness of individuals shall be taken into account;
- Watchkeeping personnel shall understanding their individual roles, responsibility and team roles;
- Master, chief engineer officer and officer in charge of watch duties shall maintain a proper watch, making the most effective use of the resources available, (installations, equipment personnels and other);

- Watchkeeping personnel shall understand functions and operation of installations/equipment, and be familiar with handling them;
- Watchkeeping personnel shall understand information and how to respond to information from each station/installation/equipment;
- Information from the stations/installations/equipment shall be appropriately shared by all the watchkeeping personnel;
- Watchkeeping personnel shall maintain an exchange of appropriate communication in any situation; and Watchkeeping personnel shall notify the master/chief engineer officer/officer in charge of watch duties without any hesitation when in any doubt as to what action to take in the interest of safety.

5. Fitness for Duty:

5.1 All persons who are assigned duty as officer in charge of a watch or as a rating forming part of a watch shall be provided a minimum of 10 hours of rest in any 24-hour period.

5.2 The hours of rest may be divided into no more than two (2) periods, one (1) of which shall be at least six (6) hours in length.

5.3 During overriding operational conditions, the minimum period of 10 hours may be reduced to not less than six (6) consecutive hours; provided that, any such reduction shall not extend beyond two (2) days, and not less than 70 hours of rest shall be provided in each seven (7) day period.

5.4 Watch schedules must be posted in the easily accessible to the seafarers. The schedules shall be established in a standardized format ¹ in the working language or languages of the ship and in English.

5.6 When a seafarer is on call, such as when a machinery space is unattended, the seafarer shall have an adequate compensatory rest period if the normal period of rest is disturbed by call-outs to work.

5.7 The master of every ship may require a seafarer to perform any hours of work necessary for the immediate safety of the ship, persons on board or cargo, or for the purpose of giving assistance to other ships or persons in distress at sea. Once a normal situation is restored, the master shall ensure that any seafarers who worked through a scheduled rest period receive the appropriate period of rest.

6. Watchkeeping at Sea:

6.1 The master of every ship is bound to ensure that watchkeeping arrangements are adequate for maintaining a safe navigational and cargo watch.

6.2 Under the master's general direction, the officers of the navigational watch are responsible for navigating the ship safely during their periods of duty, when they will be particularly concerned with avoiding collision and stranding.

6.3 The chief engineer officer of every ship is bound, in consultation with the master, to ensure that watchkeeping arrangements are adequate to maintain a safe engineering watch.

6.4 The officer in charge of the watch is the Master's representative and is primarily responsible at all times for the safe navigation of the ship and for complying with COLREG.

7. Lookout:

7.1 A proper look-out shall be maintained at all times in compliance with Rule 5 of COLREG and shall serve the purpose of:

- Maintaining a continuous state of vigilance by sight and hearing as well as by all other available means, with regard to any significant change in the operating environment;
- Fully appraising the situation and the risk of collision, stranding and other dangers to navigation; and
- Detecting ships or aircraft in distress, shipwrecked persons, wrecks, debris, and other hazards to safe navigation.

7.2 The lookout must be able to give full attention to the keeping of a proper lookout and no other duties shall be undertaken or assigned which could interfere with that task.

8. Protection of the Marine Environment:

8.1 The master, officers and ratings shall be aware of the serious effects of operational or accidental pollution of the marine environment and shall take all possible precautions to prevent such pollution, particularly within the framework of relevant international and port regulations.

9. Performing the navigational watch:

9.1 The officer in charge of the navigational watch shall:

- Keep the watch on the bridge;
- In no circumstances leave the bridge until properly relieved; and
- Continue to be responsible for the safe navigation of the ship, despite the presence of the master on the bridge, until informed specifically that the master has assumed that responsibility and this is mutually understood

9.2 During the watch, officer in charge at sufficiently frequent intervals, must be check the course steered, position and speed, to ensure that the ship follows the planned course.

9.3 The officer in charge of the navigational watch shall not be assigned or undertake any duties which would interfere with the safe navigation of the ship.

9.4 In case of using radar, the officer in charge of the navigational watch shall bear in mind the necessity to comply at all times with the provisions on the use of radar contained in the COLREG regulations, 1972.

9.5 A proper record shall be kept during the watch of the movements and activities relating to the navigation of the ship.

9.6 Operational tests of shipboard navigational equipment shall be carried out at sea as frequently as practicable and as circumstances permit, in particular before hazardous conditions affecting navigation are expected. Whenever appropriate, these tests shall be recorded. Such tests shall also be carried out prior to port arrival and departure.

9.7 officer in charge of the navigational watch shall make regular checks to ensure that:

- The person steering the ship or the automatic pilot is steering the correct course;
- The standard compass error is determined at least once a watch and, when possible, after any major alteration of course; the standard and gyro-compasses are frequently compared and repeaters are synchronized with their master compass;
- The automatic pilot is tested manually at least once a watch;
- The navigation and signal lights and other navigational equipment are functioning properly;
- The radio equipment is functioning properly; and
- The UMS controls, alarms and indicators are functioning properly.

9.8 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, or a navigation mark or to obtain soundings by the expected time;
- If, unexpectedly, 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;
- In heavy weather, if in any doubt about the possibility of weather damage;
- If the ship meets any hazard to navigation, such as ice or a derelict; and
- In any other emergency or if in any doubt.

10. Performing the engineering watch:

10.1 Officer in charge of the engineering watch shall ensure that the established watchkeeping arrangements are maintained and that, under direction, engine-room ratings, if forming part of the engineering watch, assist in the safe and efficient operation of the propulsion machinery and auxiliary equipment.

10.2 Officer in charge of the engineering watch shall continue to be responsible for machinery-space operations, despite the presence of the chief engineer officer in the machinery spaces, until specifically informed that the chief engineer officer has assumed that responsibility and this is mutually understood.

10.3 In case of the machinery spaces are in the periodic unmanned condition, the designated duty officer in charge of the engineering watch shall be immediately available and on call to attend the machinery spaces.

10.4 chief engineer officer shall ensure that the officer in charge of the engineering watch is informed of all preventive maintenance, damage control, or repair operations to be performed during the engineering watch.

10.5 Officer in charge of the engineering watch shall be responsible for the isolation, bypassing and adjustment of all machinery under the responsibility of the engineering watch that is to be worked on, and shall record all work carried out.

10.6 When the engine-room is put in a stand-by condition, the officer in charge of the engineering watch shall ensure that all machinery and equipment which may be used during manoeuvring is in a state of immediate readiness and that an adequate reserve of power is available for steering gear and other requirements.

10.7 Officers in charge of an engineering watch shall direct any other member of the engineering watch to inform them of potentially hazardous conditions which may adversely affect the machinery or jeopardize the safety of life or of the ship.

10.8 The officer in charge of the engineering watch shall take the action necessary to contain the effects of damage resulting from equipment breakdown, fire, flooding, rupture, collision, stranding, or other cause.

10.9 Before the watch, the officer in charge of the engineering watch shall ensure that all events related to the main and auxiliary machinery which have occurred during the engineering watch are suitably recorded.

10.10 officer in charge of the engineering watch shall ensure that any engine-room ratings who perform maintenance duties are available to assist in the manual operation of machinery in the event of automatic equipment failure.

10.11 officer in charge of the engineering watch shall notify the chief engineer officer without delay:

- When engine damage or a malfunction occurs which may be such as to endanger the safe operation of the ship;
- When any malfunction occurs which, 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 as to what decision or measures to take.

10.12 Despite the requirement to notify the chief engineer officer in the foregoing circumstances, the officer in charge of the engineering watch shall not hesitate to take immediate action for the safety of the ship, its machinery and crew where circumstances require.

11. Additional Requirements:

11.1 For additional information's and requirements concerning of the watchkeeping standards, is indicated in the chapter VIII, Section A-VIII/1 and A-VIII/2 of the STCW Convention, as amended.

12. Contact Details:

12.1 Recognized Organizations, Shipowner, ship operator or Management Company of a ship flying the Georgian flag, may contact on below information for Additional consultations and assistance.

LEPL – Maritime Transport Agency of Georgia
Ships Registry and Flag Control Department
Tel: +995 (422) 274925
E-mail: fsi@mta.gov.ge
Hotline/AOH: +995 (577) 221622

Attachments:

Annex I - Chapter VIII of the STCW Convention, as amended;
Annex II - Section A- VIII/1 and A- VIII/2 of the STCW Convention, as amended;
Annex III - IMO Assembly Resolution A.893 (21), Guidelines for Voyage Planning.

Director

SIGNED/SEALED
ELECTRONICALLY 

Tamar Ioseliani

