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Shipping Guidance Notice – 077a (This SGN Supersedes SGN 077)

GMA Requirements for Safe Manning and Watchkeeping

To: Ship Owners, Operators, Master's, Classification Societies and Recognised Organisations

References:

- SOLAS Convention Chapter V
- IMO Resolution A.1047(27)
- Gibraltar Merchant Shipping (Manning, Training and Certification for Seafarers) Regulations 2006;
- STCW Convention / STCW Code

This Shipping Guidance Notice (SGN) sets out and explains the safe manning requirements contained in the Gibraltar Merchant Shipping (Manning, Training and Certification for Seafarers) Regulations 2006, as amended, Gibraltar Administrative Instructions and the STCW Convention and Code and incorporates International Maritime Organization Resolution A.1047(27) on the Principles of Safe Manning.

This notice covers:

1. Introduction
2. Responsibilities of Owners/Operators
3. Establishing Safe Manning Requirements
4. Guidance on Appropriate Manning Levels
5. Consultation and Schedule
6. Documentation and Record Keeping
7. Application for a Safe Manning Document
8. Approval of a Safe Manning Document by the GMA
9. Notification of Changes
10. General
11. Further Information

1. Introduction

The International Convention and Code on Standards of Training, Certification and Watch-keeping (STCW) 1978, as amended (referred to in this SGN as the 'STCW Convention' and 'STCW Code' respectively), place clear responsibilities on companies owning or operating seagoing ships, to ensure that their vessels are manned with personnel of appropriate grades who have been properly trained and are certified.

The Gibraltar Merchant Shipping (Manning, Training and Certification for Seafarers) Regulations 2006 require all Gibraltar Registered ships to be in possession of a safe manning document specifying the minimum manning levels.

All vessels must be adequately manned for their safe operation, with due regard for the nature of their operation and their location.

2. Responsibilities of Owners/Operators

It is the responsibility of the owner or operator to ensure that ships are safely and adequately manned.

Every Company managing a Gibraltar Registered ship engaged in international voyages shall apply to the Gibraltar Maritime Administration for the issuance of a safe manning document. Application for safe manning documents should be addressed to the Survey Division attn.: Chief Surveyor: maritime.survey@gibraltar.gov.gi

In preparing a proposal for the minimum safe manning level of a ship, the owner or operator must:

- a) Make an assessment of the tasks, duties and responsibilities of the ship's complement as required for its safe operation, for the protection of the marine environment and for dealing with emergency situations;
- b) Prepare and submit a proposal for the minimum safe manning level based upon an assessment of the numbers and grades/capacities in the ship's complement required for the safe operation and for the protection of the marine environment, justifying the proposal by explaining how the proposed ship's complement will deal with emergency situations, including the evacuation of passengers where applicable;
- c) Ensure that the minimum safe manning level is adequate at all times and in all respects, including meeting peak workload situations, conditions and requirements, and is in accordance with the principles, recommendations and guidelines contained in this SGN;
- d) In case of changes in trading area(s), operations, construction, machinery, equipment or operation and maintenance of the ship, which may affect the safe manning level, prepare and submit a new proposal for the minimum safe manning level;

In conjunction with these factors, and to ensure that personnel do not work more hours than is safe, the owner or operator must:

- a) Identify all the functions to be undertaken onboard during intended voyages or operational periods, including determination of the number of personnel required to undertake the relevant tasks and duties under both peak and routine workload conditions;
- b) Identify those functions that constitute normal operations and determine the minimum numbers of personnel required to undertake the concurrent tasks and duties safely;
- c) Identify the skills and experience required to perform those functions;
- d) Establish working arrangements (including, on passenger ships, the establishment of a working language - in accordance with regulation 14 of Chapter V of the Safety of Life at Sea Convention (SOLAS), Gibraltar Merchant Shipping (Manning, Training and Certification for Seafarers) Regulations 2006 as amended, and Gibraltar STCW Administrative Instructions to ensure that the Master and crew are capable of undertaking concurrent and continuing operations at the appropriate level of responsibility, as specified, with respect to their skills and training; and

- e) Ensure that the working arrangements allow for sufficient rest periods to avoid fatigue, drawing up work schedules accordingly.

In applying these principles, proper account must be taken of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Resolution A.1047 (27) as amended, Principles of minimum Safe Manning in particular Annex 5 Framework for determining Minimum Safe Manning. In addition, you must take into account the International Labour Organisation (ILO), International Trade Union (ITU) and World Health Organisation (WHO) instruments with respect to:

- a) Watch keeping;
- b) Hours of work or rest;
- c) Safety management;
- d) Certification of seafarers;
- e) Training of seafarers;
- f) Occupational health and hygiene;
- g) Crew accommodation.

3. Establishing Safe Manning Requirements

The GMA requires all ships to be sufficiently manned for their safe operation according to the nature of their work.

To make that assessment the minimum safe manning level must take into account all relevant factors, including:

- a) Frequency of port calls, length and nature of the voyage;
- b) Trading area(s), waters and type of operations in which the ship or vessel is involved and any special requirements of the trade or operation;
- c) Number, size (kW) and type of main propulsion units and auxiliaries;
- d) Size, type of ship, equipment and layout;
- e) Construction and technical equipment of the ship;
- f) Cargo to be carried or operational requirements;
- g) Method of maintenance;
- h) Extent to which training activities are conducted onboard; and
- i) How the proposed complement will deal with the various emergency situations that may arise;
- j) Navigational duties and responsibilities as required by the STCW Convention, including the following a) Plan and conduct safe navigation; b) Maintain a safe navigational watch; c) Manoeuvre and handle the ship in all conditions and during all operations; d) Safely moor and unmoor the ship; v. maintain safety while in port;
- k) Cargo handling and stowage: Plan and monitor the safe loading, stowage, securing, carriage and unloading of cargo;
- l) Ship specific operations: the nature and duration of the operation(s) the ship undertakes and local environmental conditions;
- m) Ship's operations and care for persons onboard, and, maintaining life-saving, firefighting and other safety systems in operational condition: a) maintain the safety and security of all persons onboard and keep lifesaving, firefighting and other safety systems in operational condition, including the ability to muster and disembark passengers and non-essential personnel; b) operate and maintain watertight closing arrangements; c) perform operations necessary to protect the marine environment; iv. provide medical care onboard; d) undertake administrative tasks required for the safe operation of the ship;
- n) Marine engineering tasks and duties: a) operate and monitor the ship's main propulsion and auxiliary machinery; b) maintain a safe engineering watch; c) manage and perform fuel and ballast operations;

- o) Maintain the ship's engine equipment, system and services;
- p) Electrical, electronic and control engineering duties: a) operate ship's electrical and electronic equipment; and b) maintain ship's electrical and electronic systems;
- q) Radio communications: a) transmit and receive information using ship communication equipment; b) maintain a safe radio watch; c) provide communications in emergencies; Maintenance and repair: carry out maintenance and repair work to the ship and its machinery, equipment and systems, as appropriate to the method of maintenance and the repair system used.

In addition, the level of safe manning must also take into consideration:

- a) the management of safety functions of a ship underway, not underway or operating in near stationary mode;
- b) except in ships of limited size, the provision of qualified deck officers to ensure that it is not necessary for the Master to keep regular watches;
- c) except in ships of limited propulsion power or operating under provisions for unattended machinery spaces, the provision of qualified engineering officers to ensure that it is not necessary for the Chief Engineer to keep regular watches;
- d) the maintenance of applicable occupational health and hygiene standards onboard; and;
- e) the provision of proper food and drinking water for all persons onboard.

4. Guidance on Appropriate Manning Levels

In determining what constitutes a minimum safe manning level, useful guidance may also be obtained by the use of risk and hazard management tools, such as formal safety assessment.

The minimum safe manning levels referred to in this SGN are those required for all reasonably foreseeable circumstances and working conditions to permit the safe operation of the ship under normal operational conditions.

Guidance on the numbers of certified deck and engineer officers appropriate to different sizes of ships, tonnages and trading areas can be found within Gibraltar Administrative Instruction No.1 as amended.

As the watchkeeping arrangements for the engineering department and the demands placed on personnel vary significantly according to the level of automation, these tables only provide guidance; owners and operators must take all relevant factors into account before finalising their manning proposals.

5. Consultation and Schedule

It is recommended that when new ships are at the design stage and in advance of registering existing ships in Gibraltar, owners and operators consult with the Master, seafarers, seafarers' representatives (where applicable) and the GMA on their proposed manning levels and draw up a schedule accordingly. The schedule must take into account all the factors described within this SGN.

In the event of any change in equipment, construction or use of the ship, which may affect the safe manning level, the owner or operator must make an application for the issue of a new SMD.

A manning schedule need not be rewritten for each voyage or operational cycle, provided it is applicable to the voyage or cycle in question and the composition of the crew for whom it was originally intended has not changed.

Changes must not be made to the schedule unless they can be justified by substantially altered work patterns made necessary, for example, by a change in trading pattern, operation or other significant factor. Where a vessel is known to engage in an irregular trading pattern or have working hours that are unlikely to be uniform, this must be taken into account and recorded in the schedule.

The schedule and safe manning level must also take into consideration the number of qualified and other personnel required to meet peak workload situations and conditions, with regards to the number of hours of shipboard duties and rest periods.

Once agreed, the owner or operator is obliged to ensure that, as far as reasonably practicable, the minimum safe manning level is maintained and that operations are in compliance with the Hours of Work Regulations. A copy of the agreed schedule must be displayed prominently in the crew accommodation onboard the vessel.

6. Documentation and Record Keeping

When the proposal for the safe manning of a vessel has been approved by the GMA, a record of the consultation process must be maintained by the owner or operator, together with a document outlining the agreed minimum manning level.

Records of seafarers' daily hours of rest must be maintained and procedures must be in place for keeping such records. This record must be in an appropriate format and available for GMA inspection. If, on inspection, the records or other evidence indicates that manning levels are so low as to require the working of hours which exceed the permitted levels or the taking of insufficient hours of rest, the GMA will require that manning levels be adjusted so that the ship can be operated safely within the permitted hours available.

Checking of a ship's documentation will be carried out by the GMA as part of the normal routine of inspecting vessels and will include a check that records are being maintained and that the appropriate schedules are posted. Following examination, the records will be endorsed as part of the examination process.

The record must be retained for 5 years.

7. Application for a Safe Manning Document

Application for SMDs must be made by the owner/operator. These can be obtained from the GMA. Application forms must be submitted to the GMA survey division.

When applying to the GMA for a SMD, owners or operators must submit a clear and concise explanation of how:

- The proposed manning level has been determined;
- It takes account of the guidance of this SGN;
- It takes account of the hours of work provisions in the Regulations;

8. Approval of a Safe Manning Document by the GMA

A proposal will only be approved and a SMD issued provided the manning level fully satisfies the principles, recommendations and guidelines outlined in this SGN. The GMA may require an owner or operator to amend a proposal if, after evaluation, the proposal is considered inadequate.

When the GMA has agreed a proposal regarding manning of a particular ship, a SMD will be issued for that ship in a format which complies with the requirements of SOLAS. It must be retained onboard and be available for inspection by an authorised person whenever required.

A SMD of a ship may be withdrawn if an owner or operator fails to submit a new proposal where a ship changes trading area(s), construction, machinery or equipment, operation and/or method of maintenance, or, a ship persistently fails to comply with the rest hour's requirements.

9. Notification of changes

A SMD issued under the applicable regulations will remain valid until its expiry date. If there are any changes in circumstances, companies will need to apply to the GMA for approval.

Ship owners must also inform the GMA of any change in circumstances which are relevant to a SMD. The GMA will then review the document's continuing validity or approve revised proposals from the owner or operator.

10. General

The principles applying to the keeping of a safe watch are given in section A-VIII/2 of the STCW Code and must be followed in order to comply with the Regulations.

The Regulations require the Master of any ship to be responsible for the overall safety of the ship. He must also ensure that the watchkeeping arrangements are adequate for maintaining safe navigational watches at all times, including the provision of a lookout as required under the International Regulations for the Prevention of Collisions at Sea 1972, as amended. Masters, owners and operators are reminded that the GMA does not consider it safe for the officer in charge of the navigational watch to act as sole look-out during periods of darkness or restricted visibility.

The Chief Engineer officer of any ship is required to ensure that arrangements are adequate at all times for maintaining a safe engineering watch

Dylan Cocklan
Maritime Administrator (Ag)

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