



COMDTPUB P16700.4  
NVIC

NAVIGATION AND VESSEL INSPECTION CIRCULAR NO.

Subj: SPECIAL TRAINING REQUIREMENTS FOR MERCHANT MARINERS SERVING ON ROLL-ON/ROLL-OFF (RO-RO) PASSENGER SHIPS

1. PURPOSE. This Circular clarifies the special training and documentation requirements for merchant mariners serving on board Ro-Ro passenger ships as prescribed by Regulation V/2 in of the International Convention for Standards of Training, Certification and Watch-keeping 1978, as amended (STCW), and the implementing U.S. regulations in Title 46, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Subpart J of Part 10 and Subpart 12.30 of Part 12 of the STCW Interim Rule (IR), Federal Register, dated June 26, 1997. This Circular clarifies the mandatory requirements for Ro-Ro passenger ships on international voyages and serves as recommended practices for merchant mariners serving on Ro-Ro passenger ships on domestic voyages.
2. DIRECTIVES AFFECTED. None
3. BACKGROUND.
  - a. In 1993, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) embarked on a comprehensive revision of the STCW to establish the highest practical standards of competence for mariners and to reduce human error as a major cause of marine casualties. On July 7, 1995, a conference of Parties to the STCW adopted a package of amendments to the convention which establishes requirements for qualification of masters, officers, watchkeeping and other crew personnel on seagoing merchant vessels operating outside the boundary line and the responsibilities of companies that operate such vessels. The 1995 STCW Amendments entered into force on February 1, 1997.

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- b. STCW Regulation V/2 requires masters, officers, ratings, and other personnel on Ro-Ro passenger ships to have specialized training in the unique characteristics of this vessel type and passenger safety and management under crisis situations. The Coast Guard published an IR on June 26, 1997, implementing the requirements of the 1995 STCW Amendments to ensure that U.S. merchant mariners and vessel owners/operators conform to the new international provisions. This rule modified Title 46 CFR Parts 10, 12, and 15. Title 46 CFR Parts 10 and 12 now require licensed and documented (respectively) U.S. merchant mariners performing duties in safety, cargo handling, or care of passengers serving on Ro-Ro passenger to meet the appropriate requirements of STCW Regulation V/2 and section A-V/2 of the STCW Code and hold documentary evidence verifying that the required training has been provided.

#### 4. DISCUSSION.

- a. Application. This policy applies to licensed and documented U.S. merchant mariners with duties related to safety, cargo handling, or care of passengers on Ro-Ro passenger ships. A Ro-Ro passenger ship is a self-propelled vessel with roll-on/roll-off spaces or special-category spaces as defined in Chapter II-2, of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974 as amended (SOLAS).
- b. Specialized Training. Seafarers serving on board Ro-Ro passenger ships must have the following specialized training, as applicable:
  - (1) Crowd Management Training. Masters, officers and other personnel designated on muster lists to assist passengers in emergency situations must receive training in accordance with STCW Regulation V/2.4 and STCW Code A-V/2.1 that includes:
    - (a) Awareness of life-saving appliance and control plans including:
      1. knowledge of muster lists;
      2. knowledge of emergency instructions;
      3. knowledge of emergency exits; and
      4. restrictions on the use of elevators.
    - (b) Assisting passengers en route to muster and embarkation stations including:
      1. the ability to give clear reassuring orders;
      2. the control of passengers in corridors, staircases, and passageways;
      3. maintaining escape routes clear of obstructions;
      4. evacuation methods for disabled persons and persons with special needs; and
      5. how to search accommodation spaces.

(c) Mustering procedures including:

1. how to keep order;
2. how to reduce and avoid panic;
3. how to use passenger lists for evacuation counts; and
4. how to ensure that passengers are suitably clothed and have correctly donned their personal flotation devices (PFDs).

(2) Familiarization Training. Masters, officers and other personnel assigned specific duties and responsibilities on board a Ro-Ro passenger ship must have completed familiarization training appropriate to the position they are assigned on board in accordance with STCW Regulation V/2.5 and STCW Code A-V/2.2. (This should not be confused with the familiarization training required by STCW Regulation VI/1 or 46 CFR 15.1105(a). However, it should be accounted for in the written instructions on ship-specific familiarization required under Section A-I/14 of the STCW Code.) Seafarers to whom this paragraph applies must demonstrate the ability to:

- (a) Properly understand and observe any operational limitations imposed on the ship and understand and apply performance restrictions, including speed limitations in adverse weather, intended to maintain the safety of life, ship, and cargo;
- (b) Properly apply the procedures established for the ship regarding the opening, closing and securing of bow, stern, and side doors and ramps and correctly operate the related systems;
- (c) Understand and apply international and national requirements for Ro-Ro passenger ships relevant to the specific ship concerned and the required duties;
- (d) Properly account for the stress limitations for sensitive parts of the ship such as bow doors and other closing devices that maintain watertight integrity and have special stability considerations which may affect the safety of Ro-Ro passenger ships;
- (e) Properly apply shipboard procedures for maintenance of equipment peculiar to Ro-Ro passenger ships such as bow, stern, and side doors and ramps as well as scuppers and associated systems;
- (f) Make proper use of the loading and securing manuals with respect to all types of vehicles and rail cars, where applicable, and to calculate and apply stress limitations for vehicle decks;
- (g) Ensure proper observance of special precautions and limitations applying to designated dangerous cargo areas; and
- (h) Ensure proper observance of special procedures to prevent or reduce the ingress of water on vehicle decks, remove water from vehicle decks, and minimize the effects of water on vehicle decks.

- (3) Safety Training for Personnel Providing Direct Service to Passengers in Passenger Spaces. In accordance with STCW Regulation V/2.6 and STCW Code A-V/2.3, personnel providing direct services to passengers in passenger spaces must complete training and demonstrate competency in the following abilities:
- (a) Communicate with passengers during an emergency, taking into account the language or languages appropriate to the principal nationalities of passengers carried on the particular route;
  - (b) Use an elementary English vocabulary for basic instructions recognizing that simple English words can usually provide a means of communicating with a passenger in need of assistance whether or not the passenger and crew member share a common language;
  - (c) Communicate during an emergency by some other means such as by demonstration, or hand signals, or calling attention to the location of instructions, muster stations, life-saving devices or evacuations routes, when oral communication is impractical; and
  - (d) Ability to demonstrate to passengers the use of personal life-saving appliances.
- (4) Passenger Safety , Cargo Safety, and Hull Integrity Training. In accordance with STCW Regulation V/2.7 and STCW Code A-V/2.4, masters, chief mates, chief engineers, first assistant engineers, and persons assigned immediate responsibility for embarking and disembarking passengers, or for loading, discharging or securing cargo or for closing hull openings, must complete training and demonstrate competency in the following abilities:
- (a) Ability to embark and disembark passengers, with special attention to disabled persons and persons needing assistance;
  - (b) Ability to properly apply the ship's procedures for loading and discharging vehicles, rail cars, and other cargo transport units, including related communications;
  - (c) Ability to lower and hoist ramps and properly apply the ship's procedures for opening, closing and securing bow, stern, and side doors and ramps; correctly operate the associated systems and conduct surveys to ensure doors and ramps are properly sealed;
  - (d) Ability to set up and stow retractable vehicle decks;
  - (e) Ability to correctly apply the provisions of the Code of Safe Practice for Cargo Stowage and Securing for the vehicles, rail cars and other cargo transport units carried on board;

- (f) Ability to properly use the cargo-securing equipment and materials provided, taking into account their limitations;
- (g) Ability to apply any special safeguards, procedures, and requirements regarding the carriage of dangerous goods on board Ro-Ro passenger ships;
- (h) Ability to make proper use of the stability and stress information provided and calculate stability and trim for different loading conditions using the stability calculations or computer programs provided;
- (i) Ability to calculate load factors for decks;
- (j) Ability to calculate the impact of ballast and fuel transfers on stability, trim and stress;
- (k) Ability to properly apply the ship's ventilation procedures for Ro-Ro cargo spaces during vehicle loading and discharging, while on a voyage and in emergencies; and
- (l) Ability to use equipment, where carried, to monitor the atmosphere in Ro-Ro cargo spaces.

(5) Crisis Management and Human Behavior Training. Masters, chief mates, chief engineers, first assistant engineers, and persons assigned immediate responsibility for the safety of passengers in emergency situations must successfully complete the approved crisis management and human behavior training in accordance with their capacity, duties, and responsibilities on board as described in the STCW Code, Table A-V/2, column 2 (see enclosure (1)). Approved for circulation to Parties signatory to STCW, this comes into force on January 1, 1999, and effectively sets out the elements of training for crisis management. Additionally, the above noted crewmembers must provide evidence that they have achieved the standard of competence in accordance with the methods and criteria tabulated in columns 3 and 4 of enclosure (1).

c. Training must be Approved or Accepted. All training noted above must be part of a Coast Guard approved or accepted training program subject to a Quality Standards System (QSS) as described in SOLAS.

d. Refresher Training. In accordance with STCW Regulation V/2.3 and STCW Code A-V/2.3, seafarers must undertake appropriate refresher training or provide evidence of having achieved or maintained the required standard of competence in the subject matter and skills outlined in paragraphs 4.b. (1), (4), and (5) above at intervals not exceeding five years.

- e. Documentation. Title 46 CFR 15.1103(d) requires Ro-Ro passenger ship owners/operators to ensure that each seafarer assigned duties on board, as applicable, holds documentary evidence that show he or she meets the appropriate training standards required for service on seagoing Ro-Ro passenger ships.

5. ACTION.

- a. Mariners conforming to these guidelines, or an equivalent Coast Guard accepted industry standard, will be considered in compliance with the provisions of STCW Regulation V/2 and 46 CFR Part 10, Subpart J, and Part 12, Subpart 12.30, with respect to specialized training for crewmembers serving on board Ro-Ro passenger ships.
- b. Officers in Charge, Marine Inspection (OCMI), may use this Circular during periodic vessel inspections, when evaluating training programs and crew training/competency records, and during drills conducted to ensure crew competency. The guidance in this circular should also be taken into account during post marine casualty investigations to determine if any non-compliance with applicable STCW standards is evident. The OCMI should take appropriate enforcement action where necessary to encourage compliance.

Encl: (1) STCW Code Table A-V/2

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