

SAFETY BULLETIN 01 OF 2020:

Keeping a Safe Navigational Watch - Potential issues for all seafarers

This Safety Bulletin is issued following two recent serious incidents concerning Jersey Registered vessels, a Fishing Vessel and a Commercial Workboat, which the Jersey Maritime Administration has formally investigated and where reports will be published in due course. It is issued in order to bring available guidance to the attention of the whole maritime community.

In each of the above cases the vessel involved struck a charted object; in one case because the skipper became distracted and in the other because the only person in the wheelhouse fell asleep. In both cases the consequences, although serious, could have been far worse in respect to both damage and injuries.

Planning of Voyage: Irrespective of the type of vessel it is necessary that any voyage is appropriately planned. This planning should take into consideration the intended route, navigational hazards, tides, weather conditions, time of day and the capability of the vessel and crew (in terms of both number and experience). How this planning is achieved will vary according to type of vessel and the nature of the voyage. It is when the above, and any change of plan, is not properly considered and shared with those aboard; and where decisions are made “on the spur of the moment”, that things are likely to go wrong.

Keeping a Proper Lookout: *Collision Regulations: (Rule 5): Every vessel shall, at all times, maintain a proper lookout by sight and hearing as well as by all available means appropriate to the prevailing circumstances and conditions; so as to make a full appraisal of the situation and of the risk of collision.*

The above is clear, applies to all vessels even the smallest, and is not optional. It must be carried out by both sight and hearing and if you have additional equipment available, e.g. Radar, AIS or VHF you must use it appropriately.

The above means that there must always be someone paying attention to what is going on all around the vessel, including behind you.

Be aware of your surroundings: The person looking out, preferably more than one person at night or in reduced visibility, should take care to avoid distractions including mobile phones or entertainment (even at ten knots your vessel will cover a mile every six minutes, while two 30 knot vessels approaching each other will cover the same distance in only a minute); should be appropriately rested and not over-tired, and of course should not be under the influence of drugs (check the listed side effects of prescribed or over the counter medication, as these may surprise you) or alcohol (the effects are the same at sea as behind the wheel of a car).

See and be seen: Your visual lookout needs to take into account any blind spots, due to the trim of your vessel or its structure, or due to sails etc. You may need to move around rather than remain seated. Any interior lighting, including instrument illumination, must be such that it does not impact your night vision, and navigation lights must be displayed at night or in reduced visibility. Avoid photochromatic lenses when keeping watch at night.

Hear and be heard: Background noise, including music, must not be so loud that you cannot hear what is going on and sound signals must be immediately ready to use.

Other aspects:

It is strongly recommended that vessels in local waters maintain a listening watch on VHF Channel 14 within port limits, and Channel 16 outside them, so you are aware of commercial vessel activity in your vicinity and can communicate. Smaller vessels must remain well clear of large commercial vessels within port approach channels and all vessels must obey VTS instructions and signals.

If you have AIS make sure it is switched on and able to transmit as well as receive. If you have radar, make sure it is ready for use and you know how to use it.

Links to more detailed guidance from various sources, in particular from the MCA and MAIB, is covered in links listed in the annex to this Safety Bulletin

1st July 2020

Annex to Safety Bulletin 01 of 2020:

Other guidance available

MGN 137 (M&F) Look out during periods of Darkness and restricted visibility. Reminder to all UK ships and other ships operating in UK territorial waters, of the legal requirements for keeping a proper look-out during the hours of darkness

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/282304/mgn137.pdf;

Safety of Life at Sea Chapter V guide for pleasure craft. This describes how the 2002 regulations affect owners and users of small pleasure boats. It covers the following requirements: voyage planning/radar reflectors/life-saving signals/ assistance to other craft/misuse of distress signals

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/437161/74531_Solas_V_MCA098_100714_Ver1.pdf;

MGN 266 (F) Interpretation of SOLAS chapter 5 for fishing vessels Gives a summary of SOLAS chapter 5 regulations, and how they apply to fishing vessels registered in the UK.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/282259/mgn266.pdf;

MGN 296 Medication at sea: Potential effects on performance of prescription and or over the counter drugs.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/440067/296.pdf;

MGN 299 (M&F) Inappropriate use of Mobile phones whilst on duty. The use of mobile phones at inappropriate times is distracting bridge management teams from their primary duties of navigating and conning their vessel

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/882010/299.pdf;

MGN 313 (F) Keeping a safe navigational watch on fishing vessels. Explains the need to keep a proper navigational watch at all times.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/440093/313.pdf;

MAIB Safety Flyer to fishing industry 30Jun2016 Fishing Vessel St Apollo grounding and flooding
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/532666/St_Apollo_Flyer.pdf;

MGN 315(M) Keeping a safe navigational watch on merchant vessels. Explains the need to keep a proper navigational watch at all times.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/844513/MGN_315.pdf;

MGN 319 (M&F) Electronic chart plotting systems for small vessels. MCA acceptance of electronic chart plotting systems complying with the specifications developed by the sea fish industry authority (SFIA).

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/440603/MGN_319_FINAL.pdf;

MGN 349 Carriage and use of Radar reflectors on small vessels. How to permanently and correctly install a radar reflector on small vessels.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/440711/MGN_349.pdf;

MGN 357 (M&F) Night-time lookout: Photochromatic lenses and dark adaption. Avoidance of photochromatic lenses and allowing time for vision to adjust,

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/442683/MGN_357.pdf;

Maritime & Coastguard Agency Fisherman's Safety Guide 2020 A guide to safe working practices and emergency procedures for fishermen.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fishermens-safety-guide>;

Single Handed Fishing Guide 2020: to help identify hazards, assess risks and put in place control measures. It is not intended to be a definitive guide but to assist in conducting risk assessments and to improve safety on your vessel when read in conjunction with the Fisherman's Safety Guide.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/862237/Single_handed_fishing.pdf;

MSN 1884 (F) Application of fishing vessels working time sea-fishermen regulations 2004 (as amended). Includes an explanation of the concept of compensatory rest.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/753515/MSN 1884 F ILO work in fishing convention working time.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/753515/MSN_1884_F_ILO_work_in_fishing_convention_working_time.pdf);

MGN 596 Fishing Safety Management Code – Helping to improve the management of safety on fishing vessels.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/757814/MGN596_Final.pdf;