

Commonwealth of Dominica



Office of the Maritime Administrator

TO: ALL SHIPOWNERS, OPERATORS, MASTERS AND OFFICERS OF MERCHANT SHIPS

SUBJECT: AUTOMATIC IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM (AIS)

REFERENCE: (a) MSC.1/Circ.1252
(b)

APPLICABILITY: All Dominica vessels fitted with AIS

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this Circular is to bring to the attention of all concerned the mandatory implementation of annual testing of Automated Identification System equipment beginning 1 July 2012.

BACKGROUND:

The requirement for a look-out was established in COLREGS, 1972 in Rule 5:

Every vessel shall at all times maintain a proper look-out by sight and hearing as well as by all available means appropriate in the prevailing circumstances and conditions so as to make a full appraisal of the situation and of the risk of collision.

This requirement is also reinforced in STCW and multiple circulars that have been published by both the Maritime Safety Committee and the Maritime Environmental Protection Committee following the investigations of marine casualties leading to loss of property, life, and/or environmental damage.

Following an investigation of a collision involving a Dominica flagged vessel which led to the complete loss of the ship, it was determined that the absence of dedicated lookouts on both ships largely contributed to the collision of the vessels.

REQUIREMENTS:

General

- 1 All ships are required to ensure safe navigation in any and all conditions taking into account traffic, weather, visibility etc. A look-out must be a designated individual able to give full attention to their duties and shall not undertake other tasks while engaged in look-out responsibilities. The requirements in STCW Section A-VIII/2, Part 3-1, Section 15 stipulate the conditions on which a lookout may be combined with the duties of a watch-keeper.

Applicability

- 1 These requirements are applicable to all ships trading worldwide in order to ensure the safe navigation of vessels and to avoid collision.

Required Action by Owners/Operators

- 1 It is the requirement of owners/operators to ensure that the masters and watch-keepers of their vessel(s) are implementing lookouts when and where appropriate given the vessel's current crew complement, weather, and traffic.
- 2 This circular must be presented to the master of all vessels registered with Dominica Maritime Registry and the subject discussed internally to evaluate how effective look-outs will be kept.

Any questions can be directed to:

Eric Dawicki

Tel: + 1 508 992 7170

e-mail: edawicki@dominica-registry.com

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