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## Circular 2011/001

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### Minimum Safe Manning

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Date: 1 August 2014

To whom it may concern,

The purpose of this circular is to inform any shipping company the requirements and application procedure in regard of the minimum safe manning on board a Belgian flagged vessel. The circular includes all requirements set down in the IMO Assembly Resolution A.1047(27). Specifically security related duties have been incorporated in the requirements. Additional to the requirements of the above mentioned IMO Resolutions, specific procedural requirements have been included in this circular.

#### **A. Principles for minimum safe manning**

##### **1. Principles to be observed**

The following principles should be observed in determining the minimum safe manning of a ship:

##### a) Capability to:

- a.1. Maintain safe navigational, engineering and radio watches in accordance with regulation VIII/2 of the 1978 STCW Convention, as amended, and also maintain general surveillance of the ship;
- a.2. Moor and unmoor the ship safely;
- a.3. Manage the safety functions of the ship when employed in a stationary or near stationary mode at sea and/or at port;
- a.4. Perform operations, as appropriate, for the prevention of damage to the marine environment;
- a.5. Maintain the safety arrangements and the cleanliness of all accessible spaces to minimize the risk of fire;
- a.6. Provide for medical care on board ship;
- a.7. Ensure safe carriage of cargo during transit; and
- a.8. Inspect and maintain, as appropriate, the structural integrity of the ship,
- a.9. operate in accordance with the approved Ship's Security Plan.

##### b) Ability to:

- b.1. Operate all watertight closing arrangements and maintain them in effective condition, and also deploy a competent damage control party;
- b.2. Operate all onboard firefighting and emergency equipment and lifesaving appliances, carry out such maintenance of this equipment as is required to be done at sea, and muster and disembark all persons on board; and
- b.3. Operate the main propulsion and auxiliary machinery and maintain them in a safe condition to enable the ship to overcome the foreseeable perils of the voyage.

## **2. Legislation to be taken into account**

In applying such principles, Belgian Maritime Inspectorates takes into account all existing IMO, ILO, ITU and WHO instruments in force, as well as all national legislation and EU legislation, which deal with:

- a) watchkeeping;
- b) hours of work or rest;
- c) safety management;
- d) certification of seafarers;
- e) training of seafarers;
- f) occupational health and hygiene; and
- g) crew accommodation.

## **3. Onboard functions**

The following onboard functions, when applicable, should also be taken into account:

- a) ongoing training requirements for all personnel, including the operation and use of firefighting and emergency equipment, lifesaving appliances and watertight closing arrangements;
- b) specialized training requirements for particular types of ships;
- c) provision of proper food and drinking water;
- d) need to undertake emergency duties and responsibilities; and
- e) need to provide training opportunities for entrant seafarers to allow them to gain the training and experience needed.

## **B. Requirements for the application of principles of safe manning**

### **1. Introduction**

These requirements should be used in applying the principles of safe manning set out in paragraph I to this circular to ensure the safe operation of and the prevention of pollution from ships to which article III of the 1978 STCW Convention, as amended, applies and to ensure the security of ships to which chapter XI-2 of 1974 SOLAS Convention, as amended, applies, and for the protection of the marine environment.

The Belgian Maritime Inspectorate may retain or adopt arrangements which differ from the provisions herein required and which are especially adapted to technical developments and to special types of ships and trades.

### **2. Hours of work or rest**

- a) Every company is obliged to ensure that the master, officers and ratings do not work more hours than is safe in relation to the performance of their duties and the safety of the ship. The same responsibility is placed on the master in relation to the members of the ship's complement.

Manning levels should be such as to ensure that the time and place available for taking rest periods are appropriate for achieving a good quality of rest.

- b) A record of the actual hours of work performed by the individual seafarer should be maintained on board, in order to verify that the minimum periods of rest required by the EU Directive 1999/63, transposed in the Royal Decree of 12 March 2003 have been complied with.

The company is requested to take the provisions of Manila Amendments and the Maritime Labour Convention 2006 into consideration when the safe manning is being prepared.

### 3. Determination of minimum safe manning levels

- a) The purpose of determining the minimum safe manning level of a ship is to ensure that its complement includes the grades/capacities and number of persons required for the safe operation and the security of the ship and for the protection of the marine environment.
- b) The minimum safe manning level of a ship should be established taking into account all relevant factors, including the following:
  - b.1. size and type of ship;
  - b.2. number, size and type of main propulsion units and auxiliaries;
  - b.3. construction and equipment of the ship;
  - b.4. method of maintenance used;
  - b.5. cargo to be carried;
  - b.6. frequency of port calls, length and nature of voyages to be undertaken;
  - b.7. trading area(s), waters and operations in which the ship is involved;
  - b.8. extent to which training activities are conducted on board;
  - b.9. applicable work hour limits and/or rest requirements; and
  - b.10. the provisions of the approved Ship Security Plan.
- c) The determination of the minimum safe manning level of a ship should be based on performance of the functions at the appropriate level(s) of responsibility, as specified in the STCW Code, which include the following:
  - c.1. Navigation, comprising the tasks, duties and responsibilities required to:
    - c.1.1 plan and conduct safe navigation;
    - c.1.2 maintain a safe navigational watch in accordance with the requirements of the STCW Code;
    - c.1.3 manoeuvre and handle the ship in all conditions; and
    - c.1.4 moor and unmoor the ship safely.
  - c.2. Cargo handling and stowage, comprising the tasks, duties and responsibilities required to:
    - c.2.1 plan, monitor and ensure safe loading, stowage, securing, care during the voyage and unloading of cargo to be carried on the ship.
  - c.3. Operation of the ship and care for persons on board, comprising the tasks, duties and responsibilities required to:
    - c.3.1 maintain the safety and security of all persons on board and keep lifesaving, firefighting and other safety systems in operational condition;
    - c.3.2 operate and maintain all watertight closing arrangements;
    - c.3.3 perform operations, as appropriate, to muster and disembark all persons on board;
    - c.3.4 perform operations, as appropriate, to ensure protection of the marine environment;
    - c.3.5 provide for medical care on board the ship; and
    - c.3.6 undertake administrative tasks required for the safe operation and the security of the ship.
  - c.4. Marine engineering, comprising the tasks, duties and responsibilities required to:
    - c.4.1 operate and monitor the ship's main propulsion and auxiliary machinery and evaluate the performance of such machinery;
    - c.4.2 maintain a safe engineering watch in accordance with the requirements of the STCW Code;
    - c.4.3 manage and perform fuel and ballast operations; and
    - c.4.4 maintain safety of the ship's engine equipment, systems and services.
  - c.5. Electrical, electronic and control engineering, comprising the tasks, duties and responsibilities required to:
    - c.5.1 operate the ship's electrical and electronic equipment; and
    - c.5.2 maintain the safety of the ship's electrical and electronic systems.

- c.6. Radio communications, comprising the tasks, duties and responsibilities required to:
  - c.6.1 transmit and receive information using the radio equipment of the ship;
  - c.6.2 maintain a safe radio watch in accordance with the requirements of the ITU Radio Regulations and the 1974 SOLAS Convention, as amended; and
  - c.6.3 provide radio services in emergencies.
- c.7. Maintenance and repair, comprising the tasks, duties and responsibilities required to:
  - c.7.1 carry out maintenance and repair work to the ship and its machinery, equipment and systems, as appropriate to the method of maintenance and repair used.
- d) In addition to the factors and functions in paragraphs c) and d), the determination of the minimum safe manning level should also take into account:
  - d.1. The management of the safety functions of a ship at sea when not under way;
  - d.2. 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 by adopting a three watch system;
  - d.3. Except in ships of limited propulsion power or operating under provisions for unattended machinery spaces, the provision of qualified engineer officers to ensure that it is not necessary for the chief engineer to keep regular watches by adopting a three watch system;
  - d.4. The maintenance of applicable occupational health and hygiene standards on board; and
  - d.5. The provision of proper food and drinking water for all persons on board, as required.
- e) In determining the minimum safe manning level of a ship, consideration should also be given to:
  - e.1. The number of qualified and other personnel required to meet peak workload situations and conditions, with due regard to the number of hours of shipboard duties and rest periods assigned to seafarers; and
  - e.2. The capability of the master and the ship's complement to coordinate the activities necessary for the safe operation, for the security of the ship and for the protection of the marine environment.

#### **4. Proposal of minimum safe manning**

The Belgian Maritime Inspectorate requires the company responsible for the operation of the ship to prepare and submit its proposal for the minimum safe manning level of a ship in accordance with a standard form.

In annex of this circular you can find an application form for minimum safe manning certificate. This is also available on [www.mobiliteit.belgium.be](http://www.mobiliteit.belgium.be).

The company should submit a separate proposal for each vessel and for each applicable trading area.

The Belgian Maritime will inform the applying company if the proposal has been approved or refused. Proper justification will be given in case a proposal has been refused.

The minimum safe manning certificate will be issued based on the information provided on the application form, which have been approved by the Belgian Maritime Inspectorate.

In preparing a proposal for the minimum safe manning level of a ship, the company should apply the principles and requirements contained in this circular and is required to:

- a) make an assessment of the tasks, duties and responsibilities of the ship's complement required for its safe operation, for its security, for protection of the marine environment, and for dealing with emergency situations;
- b) make an assessment of numbers and grades/capacities in the ship's complement required for its safe operation, for its security, for protection of the marine environment, and for dealing with emergency situations;
- c) prepare and timely submit to the Belgian Maritime Inspectorate a proposal for the minimum safe manning level based upon the assessment of the numbers and grades/capacities in the ship's complement required for its safe operation, for its security and for 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 necessary;
- d) 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 and requirements contained in this circular; and
- e) prepare and submit to the Belgian Maritime Inspectorate a new proposal for the minimum safe manning level of a ship in the case of changes in trading area(s), construction.

The Belgian Maritime Inspectorate, when evaluating the proposal, may request the Company to submit the formal assessment on which the proposal is based.

The Belgian Maritime will inform the applying company if the proposal has been approved or refused. Proper justification will be given in case a proposal is refused. The minimum safe manning certificate(s) will be issued based on the information provided on the application form(s), which have been approved by the Belgian Maritime Inspectorate.

If a ship persistently fails to be in compliance with rest hours requirements, the Belgian Maritime Inspectorate can review and withdraw the minimum safe manning document or require a new proposal for a minimum safe manning to be prepared.

The application form(s) should be forwarded to: Scheepvaartcontrole  
Dienst vlagstaat  
Natiënkaai 5  
8400 Oostende  
Belgium

Fax: +32 59 56 14 74

Email: [ship.belflag@mobiliteit.fgov.be](mailto:ship.belflag@mobiliteit.fgov.be)



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**ANNEX**  
**APPLICATION FORM FOR MINIMUM SAFE MANNING CERTIFICATE**

Name of ship:	XXXX
Distinctive number or letters:	XXXX
IMO number:	XXXX
Port of registry:	XXXX
Gross tonnage	
National :	XXXX
International Tonnage Convention, 1969:	XXXX
Main propulsion power (kW):	XXXX
Type of ship:	XXXX
Periodically unattended machinery space:	yes/no
Grade/capacity assigned as Ship Security Officer:	XXXX

Trading area (1):
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Grade/capacity (2)	Certificate (STCW regulation) (3)	Number of persons
Master		
Chief Mate		
Deck officer in charge of a navigational watch		
Radio officer		
Chief engineer officer		
Second engineer officer		
Engineer officer in charge of an engine-room watch		
Electro-technical officer*		
Rating forming part of a navigational watch		
Rating as able seafarer deck*		
Rating forming part of an engine-room watch		
Rating as able seafarer engine*		
Rating forming part navigational/engine-room watch		

Electro-technical rating*		
Cook		
Ordinary seaman		
Cadet		

\*: Certification in accordance with the Manila Amendments to the annex to the STCW 95 Convention.

Special requirements or conditions, if any (4):

### Guidelines

- (1) **Trading area:** unless worldwide is indicated, the restricted trading area is to be further specified with following information, if applicable:
- Specific geographical area (example Hamburg – Le Havre range);
  - Duration of sailing or operation (example daytrips);
  - Specific operations or activities (example salvage or dredging activities); and/or
  - Maximum distance from a port or coast (example 200 miles from any coast).

The trading area may never exceed the trading area specified in the class certificate and the certificate of seaworthiness. Typical trading areas could be: worldwide trade, coastal area, near coastal area, Belgian seawaters, lay up...

- (2) **Grade/capacity:** the list of grades /capacities mentioned in the form is non exhaustive, additional or specific capacities may also be mentioned. Examples are: cargo officer, environmental officer, gas officer...

- (3) **Certificate (STCW regulation):** Reference should be given to the regulation of the STCW 95 Code, according to following chapters:

- Chapter II Deck department
- Chapter III Engine department
- Chapter IV Radio communication (GMDSS)
- Chapter V Specific training requirements for personnel on certain types of ships
- Chapter VI Emergency, occupational safety, medical care and survival functions
- Chapter VII Alternative certification

All references to the different regulations which are relevant and required for the function need to be mentioned.

Examples:

- Chief officer on a very large crude oil carrier: II/2 + IV/2+VI/1

- Ordinary seaman: VI/1

**(4) Specific requirements or conditions, if any**

If applicable a summary should be given of additional measures or specific conditions, which may include the following (list is non exhaustive):

- a) Additional crew members depending of certain conditions
- b) Specific category of certificates (example contracting material, off shore..)
- c) Minimum number of crewmembers having a specific training and/or certification.