



Emergency Information and arrangements for Passengers on Passenger Ships of Classes III, IV, V, VI and VI(A)

Notice to all Owners, Operators, Builders, Masters, Officers and Ratings of Passenger Ships of Classes III to VI(A)

This notice replaces M.1386 and should be read in conjunction with Merchant Shipping (Passenger Ships on Domestic Voyages) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2004, MSN 1789(M) and MGN 306(M).

Summary

This MGN describes the Master's responsibilities in relation to emergency information, including emergency signs, information, notices, announcements and public address systems on Classes III to VI(A) passenger ships and directs the reader to relevant legislation.

This MGN does not cover EU domestic passenger ships, or ships falling under MSN 1823(M) or the Small Seagoing Passenger Ships (SSPS) Code, as the documents for those regimes are self-contained.

For additional material on passengers with disabilities, see MSN 1789(M) and MGN 306(M).

1. Introduction and application

- 1.1 This MGN replaces M.1386, reflecting revisions to legislation since M.1386 was issued. Consideration should be given to material contained in MSN 1789(M) and MGN 306(M) to ensure that the needs of disabled passengers are taken into account.
- 1.2 This MGN applies to domestic passenger vessels falling within Classes III to VI(A), which are not subject to:
 - 1.2.1 the Merchant Shipping ((Safety Code of UK Categorised Waters) Regulations 2010 (SI 2010/680) and MSN 1823(M), which has its own provisions on this subject matter; or
 - 1.2.2 the Merchant Shipping (High Speed Craft) Regulations 2004 or 1996 and the High Speed Craft Codes 1994 and 2000.



- 1.3 The content of passenger emergency instructions, notices and announcements will depend on the size and type of ship. For example, a Class III or IV ship which can carry 1000 passengers will need more information displayed and broadcast than a small Class VI(A) ship carrying 20 passengers. See additional information in section 9 of this MGN.
- 1.4 It should be noted that many aspects of the subject matter of this MGN, including passenger announcements and assembly drills, form part of the safety procedures required under the Domestic Safety Management (DSM) system.

2. Statutory requirements

2.1 Statutory requirements relating to the provision of emergency information for passengers on ships of Classes III to IV(A) are as follows:

- 2.1.1 Regulation 4 of the Merchant Shipping (Emergency Information for Passengers) Regulations 1990 (SI 1990/0660) requires that ships of Classes III to VI(A) carrying more than 20 passengers be provided with a public address system. In ships of Classes IV to VI(A) carrying not more than 50 passengers in which the passengers have access to only one passenger compartment or space, a portable loud hailer may be carried in lieu of providing a public address system.
- 2.1.2 Regulations 5(8)(b) and (c) of the Merchant Shipping (Musters, Training and Decision Support Systems) Regulations 1999 (SI 1999/2722) require that on all ships of Class III, that (Regulation 5(8)(b)) clear instructions to be followed in the event of an emergency be provided for every person on board, and (Regulation 5(8)(c)) illustrations and instructions in English and in any other appropriate languages are posted in passenger cabins and conspicuously displayed at assembly (muster) stations (as appropriate) and other passenger spaces to inform passengers of:
- (i) their assembly (muster) station (as appropriate);
 - (ii) the essential actions they must take in an emergency; and
 - (iii) the method of donning lifejackets.
- 2.1.3 Regulation 9(4) of the Merchant Shipping (Musters, Training and Decision Support Systems) Regulations 1999 (SI 1999/2722) requires that on all ships of Class III where an assembly (muster) of the passengers is not held on departure, the attention of the passengers be drawn to the emergency instructions required by Regulation 5(8)(b) and (c) referred to above.
- 2.1.4 Regulation 5(2) of the Merchant Shipping (Emergency Information for Passengers) Regulations 1990 (SI 1990/0660) requires that on ships of Classes IV to VI(A) passengers shall be given emergency information at the commencement of each voyage and that notices providing emergency instructions for passengers be displayed in each passenger compartment.
- 2.1.5 Regulation 6 of the Merchant Shipping (Emergency Information for Passengers) Regulations 1990 (SI 1990/0660) requires that on ships of Classes III to VI(A), other than open or partially decked ships of Classes V to VI(A), all doors used for exits to open decks and all emergency escapes be clearly marked to indicate their purpose.

3. Public address system

3.1 The public address system, or portable loud hailer where used, should be used to inform the passengers of the action they should take in the event of an emergency that could lead to the ship being abandoned. The information, detailed in section 6, should be given either prior to or immediately upon leaving the berth. An example of such an announcement is given at Annex A to this Notice. In the case of ships of Classes IV, V and VI which operate a waterbus



or regular ferry service of short duration where compliance with regulation 5(2) of the MS (Emergency Information for Passengers) Regulations 1990 would result in very frequent broadcasting of the safety message, or where passengers are regular users of the service, other arrangements will be considered by the MCA. For example, drawing attention on the public address system, or by other means, to safety notices displayed on the back of seats where all the passengers are seated, or to safety notices widely displayed in the passenger spaces where passengers are not seated.

- 3.2 The speakers in the public address system must be so located that broadcasts will be audible in all public spaces, including open decks, to which passengers have access (Regulation 7(1) SI 1999/2722).
- 3.3 A public address system should be capable of being powered from the main source of electrical power and from an alternative source of electrical power situated in a location remote from the main source.
- 3.4 Where a public address system is not provided, the emergency information should be given by portable loud hailer. If a portable loud hailer is used as the primary means of emergency broadcast, it should be readily available and stowed in an appropriate place.

4. Marking of exits and emergency escapes

- 4.1 All doors leading from passenger spaces to open decks and all emergency escapes must be clearly marked with a sign using the word "EXIT" or the words "EMERGENCY ESCAPE DOOR/WINDOW as appropriate (Regulation 6 of the Merchant Shipping (Emergency Information for Passengers) Regulations 1990 (SI 1990/0660)). These signs should be readable at all times by means of the main or emergency lighting. In RO/RO passenger ships of Classes III to VI(A) the signs should be legible under emergency lighting conditions.
- 4.2 Where possible, exit signs should be located over the door, window or escape routes. Where an exit door is not readily visible from within the space it serves a further exit sign should be provided to indicate the direction of the door. Signs should not be on doors except in cases where a door is always closed when the ship is in service. Signs should be composed of white or light-coloured letters on a green background and, on ships not provided with emergency lighting, the signs should be made of a photoluminescent material.

5. Passenger Emergency Instructions/ Notices

- 5.1 Passenger Emergency Instructions Notices must be displayed in each passenger compartment.
- 5.2 The number to be displayed will depend on the layout of the compartments and the service the ship is engaged in.
- 5.3 On services with terminals or waiting rooms it will also be appropriate to provide notices in those locations. The information provided in such a notice should include:
 - 5.3.1 the method used to inform passengers that an emergency has arisen;
 - 5.3.2 the action they will be required to take;
 - 5.3.3 how to use life-saving equipment; and
 - 5.3.4 how to don a lifejacket where lifejackets are carried.
- 5.4 Lifejacket donning information may be given separately and on ships with a small crew, donning information should be provided in the form of posters located at the lifejacket stowage positions. Where lifejackets are stowed beneath the seats, donning information should be provided on the backs of the seats. An example of a passenger emergency instructions notice is given in Annex B to this Notice.



6. Passenger emergency Instructions Announcement

6.1 An announcement should be made at the commencement of each voyage and should contain as a minimum:

- 6.1.1 the method used to inform passengers that an emergency has occurred;
- 6.1.2 the type of life-saving appliances onboard;
- 6.1.3 the action to take in the event of an emergency;
- 6.1.4 how to use the life-saving appliances.

6.2 Announcements should be:

- 6.2.1 made in a clear and simple manner, bearing in mind that in some services a significant number of foreign tourists may be carried on occasions;
- 6.2.2 brief, compatible with the need to convey sufficient information to assist all concerned in the event of an emergency leading to abandonment;
- 6.2.3 prefaced by a special signal followed by a request for everyone's attention;
- 6.2.4 made while ensuring that no other announcement or music is allowed to be broadcast while the passenger emergency instructions announcement is being made.

6.3 Consideration should be given as whether it would be helpful to make the announcements in any languages other than English, depending on the normal passengers, and material in MSN 1789(M) and MGN 306(M) should be taken into account when considering how to meet the needs of disabled passengers.

7. Assembly (Muster) List and Emergency Instructions

7.1 Masters of ships of Class III are required, before the ship proceeds to sea, to prepare an assembly (muster) list complying with Regulation 5(3) to (7) of the Merchant Shipping (Musters, Training and Decision support Systems) Regulations 1999 (SI 1999/2722).

7.2 The Master must maintain the assembly (muster) list for the duration of the voyage for which it was prepared, and revise it or replace it if any change takes place in the crew which necessitates an alteration in the assembly (muster) list.

7.3 The assembly (muster) list is vital for specifying arrangements for crew and passengers in an emergency, and each member of the crew's role in the safety of the ship and its passengers.

8. Drills and Assemblies (Musters)

8.1 Drills and assemblies (musters) must be carried out in accordance with Regulations 8 to 11 of the Merchant Shipping (Musters, Training and Decision support Systems) Regulations 1999 (SI 1999/2722) if applicable to the Class of ship in question.

9. General

9.1 Operators of ships of Classes III to VI(A) should determine what information should be displayed and announced (see sections 5 and 6).

9.2 In the case of passenger ships of Classes III to VI(A) the number of crew members is often small and it is important that this point is taken into account by operators of these ships when emergency procedures are being considered. In some cases, this may involve active participation of some of the able-bodied passengers under the direction of crew members, particularly at the abandon ship stage. The need for crew members to be readily recognisable in an emergency is important and consideration should be given to the



provision of some distinguishing clothing, headwear, distinctive marking on lifejackets, loose covers worn over clothing or lifejackets, armbands, etc. When developing emergency procedures, operators of ships where alcohol is served onboard should note that consumption of alcohol may affect the ability of some passengers to help themselves in the event of an emergency occurring. In some scenarios, e.g., when carrying a party of schoolchildren, operators should have procedures in place to ensure that in these situations effective emergency action can still be taken.

9.3 In-water support equipment, i.e. lifebuoys and buoyant apparatus, should be conspicuous and care taken that the primary function of buoyant apparatus is clearly apparent, i.e. that its use as lifesaving equipment is as apparent as, or more apparent than, than its use as seating. However, these should only be used as a last resort – the evacuation plan should aim at dry-shod evacuation. Where lifejackets are carried, lifejacket lockers should be conspicuously marked.

¹ Passenger ships of Classes III to VI(A) are defined in the Merchant Shipping (Passenger Ship construction: Ships of Classes III to VI(A)) Regulations 1998 (SI 1998/2515).

More Information

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EXAMPLE

EXAMPLE OF EMERGENCY INSTRUCTION BROADCAST

1. **Special Signal**
2. Please listen very carefully to the following safety announcement.
3. In the event of an emergency you will be informed by means of an announcement*/a signal consisting of seven or more short blasts followed by one prolonged blast on the ship's whistle and/or the alarm bells*/by a crew member*.
4. The vessel is equipped with buoyant apparatus and lifebuoys which can be manually launched or will float-free in the event of the vessel sinking.
5. In the event of an emergency requiring evacuation you will be instructed by the Master or crewmember? to don a lifejacket, proceed to the nearest accessible exit and to enter a liferaft or the water. All exits are clearly marked.
6. While entering the water is a last resort, if in the water take hold of one of the grablines on a lifebuoy or buoyant apparatus. Each lifebuoy will support two persons and each buoyant apparatus []* persons.
7. Thank you for your attention.

* As appropriate.



EXAMPLE

**EMERGENCY INSTRUCTIONS FOR
PASSENGERS****Please Read and Take Careful Note of
the Contents of This Notice**

1. In the event of an emergency you will be informed over the public address system*/by means of a signal on the ship's whistle*/by sounding of the alarm bells*/by the person in charge*. The signal on the whistle and/or the alarm bells will be;

Seven or more short blasts followed by one prolonged blast.



Remain calm and follow instructions.

2. In the event of the ship having to be abandoned you will be instructed by the Master to leave the compartment in which you are located using the nearest accessible exit which is clearly marked.
3. Don a lifejacket.
4. Enter a liferaft or water.
5. While entering the water is a last resort, if in the water hold one of the grablines on a life buoy/buoyant apparatus* Each lifebuoy can support two persons and each buoyant apparatus can support []† persons.

* As Appropriate.

† Insert appropriate number.

