



SUB-COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS OF
TRAINING AND WATCHKEEPING
32nd session
Agenda item 10

STW 32/10/3
1 December 2000
Original: ENGLISH

STANDARD MARINE COMMUNICATION PHRASES

Submitted by the International Shipping Federation (ISF)

SUMMARY

Executive summary: ISF wishes to suggest some minor amendments to the current draft of the SMCP, to align it with language which ISF believes is actually more likely to be used in practice.

Action to be taken: Paragraph 4

Related documents: STW 31/11/1, NAV 46/14/Add.1 and NAV 46/16

1 This paper comments on STW 32/10 (Secretariat) and is submitted in accordance with paragraph 46.5 of the Guidelines on the Organization and Method of Work of the MSC and the MEPC and their subsidiary bodies.

2 In the forward to the draft SMCP (NAV/46/14/Add 1) it is stated that navigational and safety communications must be precise, simple and unambiguous so as to avoid confusion and error. ISF believes that the publication of the SMCP will contribute greatly towards this goal.

3 ISF has reviewed the draft SMCP in detail, and on a line-by-line basis, and ISF wishes to suggest a number of minor improvements which may further add to the clarity and usefulness of the SMCP. In particular, we think it is important for IMO to ensure that the SMCP phrases are aligned, so far as possible, with those that are generally used by the shipping industry in practice. These suggested amendments are attached as an annex to this submission.

Action requested of the Sub-Committee

4 The Sub-Committee is invited to consider the suggestions made by ISF and to decide, if appropriate, that they should be taken into account before the SMCP is finally adopted by the Assembly, and the means by which this might be achieved.

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ANNEX

SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS TO SMCP CONTAINED IN NAV/46/14/Add.1

General (Cardinal points)

Multiple references to *cardinal points* should be replaced with *cardinal and half cardinal points* (see comments on glossary below).

(Making separate definitions such as cardinal points to include half cardinal points in the SMCP is not a helpful practice and sets a dangerous precedent. SMCP should stick to calling things what they are commonly called in ordinary practice. A half cardinal point is not a cardinal point).

5 **Typographical conventions**

Page 10

Replace text explaining tildes with the following:

~ **tildes** precede possible words or phases which can be used after / in association with the given standard phrase.

14 **Distances**

Page 15

Delete “*Preferably*” and “*otherwise in kilometres or metres*”

(The statement here raises a fundamental question concerning the extent which the metre is used at sea today as a unit of distance measurement. In general the metre is used for measurement of relatively short distances (water depth, height of tide, drafts, length, beam, distance to quay, buoy etc) but not for measurement of distance associated with navigation and defining positions. The reason for difference is simple: the scale for measurement of nautical miles is simply the latitude scale on a chart (one nautical mile equals one minute of latitude). On a small scale chart distance measurement in kilometres is impractical).

It is noted that visibility is reported in Met reports in metres and the use of such on page 37 is appropriate.

Glossary

Page 17 onwards

The following changes to the definitions are suggested:

Adrift	Floating at sea and moving with the current, tide or wind
Backing (of wind)	Shift of wind direction in an anti-clockwise manner, for example from north to west. Opposite of veering

Blast	A signal made with the whistle of the vessel
Blind sector	An area which cannot be scanned by the ship's radar because it is shielded by parts of the superstructure, masts etc.
Cable	1: Chain, wire or rope primarily used for mooring a ship 2: (Measurement) one hundred fathoms, approximately 600 feet or one tenth of a nautical mile
Capsize	To turnover
Cardinal points	The four main points of the compass: north, east, south and west
Half cardinal points	The four main points lying between the cardinal points: north east, south east; south west and north west
Multiple references to <i>cardinal points</i> should be replaced with <i>cardinal and half cardinal points</i>	
Compatibility (of goods)	States whether different goods can be safely stowed together in one hold
Derelict	Vessel still afloat, abandoned at sea
Draft	Depth in water at which a vessel floats
Drifting	Being driven along by the wind or current
Fire patrol	A member of the watch ...
Fumes	Often harmful gas ...
Inert (to)	To displace the oxygen in an oil tank with inert gas ...
Leeward	On or towards the sheltered side of a ship; opposite of windward
Leeway	Vessel's sideways drift leeward of the desired course
Lifeboat station	Place assigned to crew and passengers to gather before ...
Muster list	List of crew, passengers and others on board ...
Overflow	Accidental escape of oil or liquid from a tank which is full
Safe speed	That speed of a vessel allowing time for effective action to be taken to avoid a collision
Safety load	Delete reference
SWL	Safe working load: maximum working load that should not be exceeded

Sea mark	An elevated object in shoal water to act as a beacon, navaid or warning
Shackle	Length of chain cable measuring 15 fathoms
Spill control gear	Special equipment for fighting accidental spill of oil or chemicals
Spreader	here: extended step of a pilot ladder ...
Stripping	Draining of tanks by pump of the remaining cargo, water etc
Union purchase	A common method of cargo handling by combining two derricks, one of which is positioned over the hatch, the other over the ship's side
Unlit	When the light of a buoy or a lighthouse is inoperative
UTC	Coordinated Universal Time
Variable (of wind)	A wind that is constantly changing direction
Veering (of wind)	Clockwise change in the direction of the wind. In the northern hemisphere such a shift from SW to NW indicates an improvement in the weather
Veer out	To pay out or ease out cable
Windward	Towards the direction from which the wind is blowing

VTs special terms

Manoeuvring speed A vessel's reduced speed in restricted ...

Term fictive needs to be defined

Standard Marine Communication Phrases

Page 39: Reference to LNG-tanker should include LPG-tanker

Page 65 and Page 67: Remove reference to kilometres

Page 68: Pumping of ballast water should include reference to fore/after peak tanks

Page 87: ~ suffering from shock is a more common expression for 20.1

Page 89: How common is term container bridge in preference to container gantry?

Page 90: Note discharging is a common alternative for unloading

Page 91: Keep the safe working load ... what does this mean?

Page 93: Alarm the harbour fire brigade would more commonly be Call the ...

Page 99: Replace fume with fumes

Page 102: Airplanes for consistency should read aircraft (see COLREG)