



SUB-COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS OF
TRAINING AND WATCHKEEPING
33rd session
Agenda item 5

STW 33/5/1
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FOLLOW-UP ACTION TO THE 1995 STCW CONFERENCE

Guidance on conflicting actions in collision avoidance

Note by the Secretariat

SUMMARY

Executive summary: This document contains the information provided by NAV 47, as requested by the Sub-Committee

Action to be taken: Paragraph 3

Related documents: STW 32/16 and NAV 47/13

1 In considering the need for the development of appropriate guidance for maritime training institutes on the importance of paying proper attention in the training of officers of the navigational watch to the matter of conflicting actions in collision avoidance, STW 32 decided that there was insufficient information on which to take action. The Sub-Committee invited the NAV Sub-Committee to provide examples to clearly demonstrate the issues involved in order that the Sub-Committee might propose appropriate solutions.

2 The NAV Sub-Committee, through its Ships' routing and related matters working group, considered the matter, and approved a note for the Sub-Committee, given at annex, providing the requested information on conflicting actions in collision avoidance.

Action requested of the Sub-Committee

3 The Sub-Committee is invited to consider the information provided and take action as appropriate.

ANNEX

NOTE FOR THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS OF
TRAINING AND WATCHKEEPING**Conflicting actions in collision avoidance**

An International Conference on Preventing Collisions at Sea was held at Dalian, China, in September 1996. One of the “problem areas” identified at the Conference was “Conflicting actions in collision avoidance and the application of Rule 8”. The problem areas identified at the Dalian Conference were brought to the attention of the Sub-Committee by the Netherlands Government, NAV 43/3/4 and by the IAIN, NAV 43/3/12.

In NAV 46/16, paragraphs 4.22 to 4.28 the Sub-Committee recalled that MSC 70 had authorized it to consider the issue of conflicting actions in collision avoidance and to propose solutions. Reports of collision cases indicated that at times in head-on encounters Rule 8 was applied in isolation of the other Steering and Sailing rules. The Sub-Committee agreed on a draft amendment to Rule 8(a) to link Rule 8 with the other Steering and Safety Rules. The Sub-Committee was of the opinion that the STW Sub-Committee should be requested to make training establishments for officers of the navigational watch aware of the importance to pay proper attention in the training of officers of the navigational watch to the matter of conflicting actions in collision avoidance.

This matter has been brought to the attention of the STW Sub-Committee. The STW Sub-Committee has invited (MSC 74/7, paragraph 2.3) the NAV Sub-Committee to provide examples clearly demonstrating the issues involved in order that the STW Sub-Committee might propose appropriate solutions in due course.

At the Dalian Conference several papers drew attention to the relatively high frequency of conflicting actions in collision avoidance, especially in meeting or crossing situations. In the paper “Radar assisted collisions – why they happen” M.T. Stevens noted the tendency of vessels to make alterations of course away from the target in order to achieve a safe passing distance. In the paper “Collision avoidance with starboard-to-starboard meeting vessels in restricted visibility” by J. Zhao, W.G. Price, R.P. Grime and P.A. Wilson the most important problem was considered to be unco-ordinated action between the two vessels. According to W. Hinsch most mariners follow the principle of turning to starboard in a collision situation while a fairly high number attach more importance, especially in a starboard-to-starboard encounter, to achieving a wider berth by altering course to port. According to this paper cancelling action, vessels not in sight of one another, forms one third of all collisions at sea the German Maritime Boards of Inquiry have to deal with.

One of the best-known examples of conflicting action is the collision between the two passenger vessels **Andrea Doria** and **Stockholm** off Nantucket light vessel on 25 July 1956. The two vessels were proceeding in opposite directions in fog. The **Stockholm** made a series of small alterations to starboard then turned hard to starboard. The **Andrea Doria** made a small alteration of course to port to increase the starboard-to-starboard passing distance then turned hard to port before the collision.

A further example is the collision in fog between the two VLCCs **Venoil** and **Venpet** off South Africa on 2 October 1977. The vessels were proceeding in opposite directions. The **Venoil** made several small alterations of course to starboard to increase the port-to-port passing distance. The **Venpet** made a series of small alterations of course to port to pass starboard-to-starboard.

The following more recent examples were given at the Dalian Conference in the paper by W.Hinsch:

1992	EUROPA	INCHON GLORY	South China Sea
1993	GUDRUN	GINA P	Baltic Sea
1994	EVIVA	CHARALAMOS B	North Sea
1995	GUDRON II	ZIEMIA LUBELSKA	Baltic Sea
1995	ALEXANDRA	XIN HUA 7	south of Pusan

Traffic separation schemes have brought about an improvement by reducing the number of end-on, or near end-on, encounters but there are still many coastal regions where there is no traffic separation. Bringing this matter to the attention of mariners may be the best means of further improvement. Several papers at the Dalian Conference stressed the importance of training, especially radar training, as a means of reducing collisions at sea.

References:

International Conference on Preventing Collisions at Sea, Dalian 1996, Report of Proceedings "Maritime Collisions and Prevention", Publishing House of Dalian Maritime University, ISBN 0952059241, 0952059231.