

**RESOLUTION A.337(IX)**

*Adopted on 12 November 1975  
Agenda item 7(c)*

**RECOMMENDATION ON PRINCIPLES AND OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE  
FOR DECK OFFICERS IN CHARGE OF A  
WATCH IN PORT**

THE ASSEMBLY,

NOTING Article 16(i) of the IMCO Convention concerning the functions of the Assembly,

RECALLING Resolution A.285(VIII) concerning basic principles and operational guidance relating to navigational watchkeeping,

HAVING CONSIDERED the Report of the Maritime Safety Committee on its thirty-second session,

ADOPTS the Recommendation on Principles and Operational Guidance for Deck Officers in Charge of a Watch in Port contained in the Annex to this Resolution,

RECOMMENDS that Member Governments implement as soon as practicable the measures contained in this Recommendation.

ANNEX

**RECOMMENDATION ON PRINCIPLES AND OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE  
FOR DECK OFFICERS IN CHARGE OF A  
WATCH IN PORT**

**I. Introduction**

1. This Recommendation applies to a ship safely moored alongside or safely at anchor under normal circumstances in port. For ships at an exposed anchorage reference should be made to the additional precautions contained in the Recommendation on Basic Principles and Operational Guidance Relating to Navigational Watchkeeping. Special requirements may be necessary for special types of ships and/or cargo.

2. The following principles and operational guidance should be taken into account by ship-owners, masters and watchkeeping officers.

**II. Watch and its Arrangements**

3. Arrangements for keeping a watch when the ship is in port should be:

- (a) to ensure the safety of life, ship, cargo and port;

- (b) to observe international, national and local rules;
- (c) to maintain order and the normal routine of the ship.

4. The ship's master decides the number of men who will make up the watch and the duration of the watch, depending on the conditions of mooring, the type of the ship and character of duties.

5. There should always be a qualified deck officer in charge of the watch except in vessels under 500 gross register tons not carrying dangerous cargo where the master may appoint whoever has appropriate qualifications to keep the watch in port.

6. The arrangements of the necessary equipment should be such as to provide the most efficient performance of the duties by every watchkeeper.

### III. Taking Over the Watch

7. The officer of the watch should not hand over the watch to the relieving officer if he has any reason to believe that the latter is apparently under any disability which would preclude him from carrying out his duties effectively. If in doubt, the officer of the watch should inform the master accordingly.

8. The relieving officer should be informed by the officer being relieved on:

- (a) the depth of water at the berth, ship's draught, the level and time of high and low waters; fastening of the moorings, arrangements of the anchor(s) and the slip of the chain, and other features of mooring important for the safety of the ship; state of main engines and availability for emergency use;
- (b) all work to be performed on board ship; the nature, amount and disposition of cargo loaded or remaining or any residues after unloading on board ship;
- (c) the level of water in bilges and ballast tanks;
- (d) the signals and/or lights being exhibited;
- (e) the authorized persons on board and the number of crew members required to be on board;
- (f) the state of fire-fighting appliances;
- (g) any special port regulations;
- (h) the master's standing and special orders;
- (i) the lines of communication that are available between the ship and the dock staff and/or port authorities in the event of an emergency arising or assistance being required;
- (j) other circumstances of importance to the safety of the ship and protection of the environment from pollution.

9. The relieving officer should satisfy himself that:

- (a) fastenings of moorings and/or anchor chain are adequate;
- (b) the appropriate signals and/or lights are properly hoisted and exhibited;
- (c) safety measures and fire protection regulations are being maintained;
- (d) he is aware of the nature of any hazardous/dangerous cargo being loaded or discharged and the appropriate action in the event of any spillage and/or fire;

- (e) no external conditions and circumstances imperil the ship and that his own ship does not imperil others.

10. If, at the moment of handing over the watch, an important operation is being performed it should be concluded by the officer being relieved, except when ordered otherwise by the master.

#### IV. Keeping a Watch

11. The watchkeeping officer should:

- (a) make rounds to inspect the ship at appropriate intervals;
- (b) pay particular attention to:
  - (i) the condition and fastening of the gangway, anchor chain and/or moorings, especially at the turn of the tide or in berths with a large rise and fall and, if necessary, take measures to ensure that they are in a normal working condition;
  - (ii) the draught, underkeel clearance and the state of the ship to avoid dangerous listing and trim during cargo handling and/or ballasting;
  - (iii) the state of the weather and sea;
  - (iv) observance of all Regulations concerning safety precautions and fire protection;
  - (v) water level in bilges and tanks;
  - (vi) any other persons on board and their location, especially those in remote or enclosed spaces;
  - (vii) the exhibition of any signals and/or lights;
- (c) in bad weather, or on receiving a storm-warning, take the necessary measures to protect the ship, the personnel and the cargo;
- (d) take every precaution to prevent pollution of the environment by his own ship;
- (e) in an emergency threatening the safety of the ship, raise the alarm, inform the master, take all possible measures to prevent any damage to the ship and, if necessary, request assistance from the shore authorities and/or neighbouring ships;
- (f) be aware of the state of stability so that in the event of fire the shore fire-fighting authority may be advised of the quantities of water that can be pumped on board without endangering the ship;
- (g) offer assistance to ships or persons in distress;
- (h) take the necessary precautions to prevent accidents or damage when propellers are to be turned;
- (i) enter in a log-book all important events affecting the ship.