

Small but vital changes



Safety: Eddie Janson

Captain Eddie Janson of MariTrain AB, instructor and consultant in maritime safety, points the Shipgaz spotlight at safety related matters.

On the 1st of July the amended ISM code will come into force. It is now more than ten years since the ISM code was made mandatory for most ships in the world.

For most shipping managers the development of a Safety Management System has reduced the number of accidents and made their operations safer. But there are still some companies that see the ISM code as a burden and not as the useful tool it can be. These companies only want to fulfil the minimum standard of the ISM code.

The changes in the ISM code will not affect the 'good' companies very much, they already live up to the new standards, but those companies that only meet the minimum

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Compliance with the International Safety Management (ISM) Code became mandatory with the adoption of SOLAS, Chapter IX, "Management for the Safe Operation of Ships".

requirements today will have to improve their Safety Management System.

At a first glance there are not many words that have been changed, but these words give a much stronger focus on handling risks and to prevent accidents before they happen.

With the amendments, the ISM code will require all companies to have a Risk Management System including both Risk Assessment and Root Cause Analysis.

The updates are:

Paragraph 1.2.2, Objectives: Has been changed from "establish safeguards against all identified risks" to "assess all identified risks to its ships, personnel and the environment and establish safeguards."

This means that a risk assessment must be made for all operations carried out on board the vessels.

Paragraph 7, Development of plans for shipboard operations: Includes two small but important changes. The first: where the old ISM code only required the company to have "procedures for the preparation of plans, instructions and checklist for key shipboard operations" the new version requires the company to actually establish these instructions.

The second: The safety of personnel is now included and not only limited to the safety of the ship and prevention of pollution.

Paragraph 8.1, Emergency preparedness: Has been changed from "The Company should establish procedures to identify, describe and respond to potential emergency shipboard situations" to "The Company should identify potential emergency shipboard situations, and establish procedures to respond to them."

This statement reflects the adoption of a risk assessment concept within the ISM Code. Now companies need to consider in advance all potential emergency situations and establish emergency procedures.

Paragraph 9.2, Reports and analysis of non-conformities, accidents and hazardous occurrences: The sentence "The Company should establish procedures for the implementation of corrective actions" has been amended with "including measures intended to prevent recurrence".

To be able to include measures to prevent recurrence the Root Cause must be established, therefore companies should have a system for Root Cause Analysis. The Root Cause Analysis process should not only be used after an accident. It is even more important to use it after near misses, hazardous occurrences and non-con-



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formities to prevent real accidents from happening.

Other changes: Paragraph 5 is amended with the word Periodically for the Masters review.

In Paragraph 10 a similar change as in Paragraph 7 is made, so now all critical equipment on board must be identified, tested and have specific measures to ensure the reliability.

As stated in paragraph 12 about Internal audits, the intervals between internal audits can now “In exceptional circumstances” be up to 15 months.

The updated ISM code also includes three new chapters with guidance. “Guidelines for the operational implementation of the ISM code” establish the basic principles for reviewing the safety management system for a company, the role of the Designated Person under the ISM code, reporting and analyzing of non-conformities, accidents

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and hazardous occurrences (including near misses) and performing internal audits and management reviews.

It is specifically mentioned that the Company should provide adequate resources and shore based support to the Designated Person.

Even here it is mentioned that there must be a system in place to prevent reoccurrence of reported accidents and near misses.

“Guidelines for qualifications and training of the Designated Person” state that he required qualifications for a Designated Person shall be experience either as a Ship Officer or at least three years practical senior

PHASE 1 & 2 OF THE ISM CODE

→ By 1998 much of the commercial shipping community was required to be in compliance with the ISM code. By 2002 the ISM Code became mandatory to practically all of the international shipping community.

level in ship management operations. The guidelines for training only include eight subjects with no guidance on how the training will be performed.

“Guidelines on Near-Miss reporting” include requirements of a ‘just culture’ in companies where seafarers can report near misses without any punishment. It also requires that lessons learned from near misses should be used to improve safety performance. In order to do this, all near misses must be investigated in the same manner as real accidents.

Most tanker companies that today have to fulfil the requirements of TMSA and Vetting Inspection Scheme already have a Risk Management system in place. However, for companies that do not, the introduction of the Risk Assessment and Root Cause Analysis methodologies will most likely result in a reduction in their accident records. *