

Merchant Marine Circular

Panama Maritime Authority
General Directorate of Merchant Marine
Control and Compliance Department

MERCHANT MARINE CIRCULAR MMC-170

To: Owners/Operators of Panamanian Vessels, Recognized Organizations, Masters, Officers and crewmembers undertaking lookout duties.

Subject: Night Time Lookout.

Reference: Resolution No. 106-OMI-52-DGMM of March 19th, 2008 adopted MSC.1/Circular.1280.

1. Purpose:

The purpose of this MMC is to make known the content of the Resolution through which certain guidelines of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in relation to the Night-Time Lookout – Photochromic Lenses and Dark Adaptation.

2. Scope:

This circular applies to ship operators, masters, skippers, officers and ratings undertaking lookout duties.

3. Based on highlights of recent marine accident reports and recalling the section A-VIII/2, part 3-1, paragraph 19, of the STCW Code; which states that the relieving officer shall not take over the watch until their vision is fully adjusted to the light conditions, a new Circular has been issued by the Maritime Safety Committee of the International Maritime Organization regarding dark adaptation.

4. Based on the previous paragraph, the Administration instructs all crewmembers of Panamanian flag vessels to follow the instructions below:

4.1 In cases where the crew with lookout duties, alternate periods on the bridge with periods of safety checks and fire watches in other parts of the vessel; which are brightly lit, the same period of dark adaptation will be required every time the lookout returns to the bridge.



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4.2 Darkness must be maintained at the bridge, making full use of blackout procedures, avoiding contamination from residual lights and surrounding uncurtained areas.

4.3 Photochromic lenses, which darken automatically with exposure to strong light and lighten in dark surroundings, should not be worn for lookout duties at night, due to the possibility of significant reduction of night vision.

October, 2023 – Regulation/Legislation reference was updated, Contact information was updated.

July, 2008.

Inquiries concerning the subject of this Merchant Marine Circular or any other request should be forward to:

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