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GUIDLINES FOR COMMERCIAL CRAFT OPERATIONS - (DAY & EVENING)

"The Saint Lucia Air and Sea Ports Authority's (SLASPA) Division of Maritime Affairs has put together some pertinent guidelines for Owners, Boatmasters and Captains of Sunset & Evening Cruises and local boat rides. The information found in this booklet will ensure that everyone is operating within the law and provides helpful tips for the safety of passengers, crew and property on such pleasure rides.

INTRODUCTION

The following Safety considerations have been formulated to enhance Boating Safety Standards in the expanding Shipping Industry. The information provided aims to pre-empt boating incidents or casualties; with particular reference to the Shipping Act Cap 13:27, and the Saint Lucia Air and Sea Ports (SLASPA) Seaports Regulations. In addition, there are other National Legislations which impact upon the operations of these activities.



Prior to conducting sunset/evening excursions, all operators must be authorized by SLASPA and adhere to the requisite conditions.

COMMUNICATIONS – (VHF)

APPLICABLE TO SUNSET AND DAY RIDES

All vessels departing a Port of call for the purposes of Sunset/Evening excursions/ Daytime Local Boat Rides MUST notify the Lighthouse of the following:

- 1.The number of passengers and crew on board;
- 2.The Estimated Time of Arrival (ETA) back to port. This information is important as it can be utilized by the Police Marine Unit (PMU) in the event of a Search and Rescue (SAR) operation. In that regard, the master must ensure the numbers given are accurate to ensure accountability.

The Lighthouse may alert the PMU regarding the presence of vessels conducting such rides. When a vessel's ETA will be or has been delayed, the Master should alert the lighthouse keeper; who will then inform the relevant authorities including the PMU if necessary.

VHF PROTOCOL – SUNSET AND DAY RIDES

The Master is responsible for ensuring that the music is **TURNED OFF** when transmitting messages to the Lighthouse and upon entering and exiting the ports of entry or various bays.



SECURITY



The Master must ensure that a passenger head count (muster list) is conducted prior to departure from a port and upon return. In the case of vessels that are at anchorage e.g. Anse Cochon, Soufriere and other bays, after the anchor has been raised a headcount **MUST** be conducted to ensure that all passengers and crew are accounted for.

ANCHOR WATCH / SWIMMERS



Upon anchoring the vessel, the Master **MUST** ensure there is a crew member designated to conduct Anchor Watch to ensure the vessel is not drifting or dragging its anchor. The crew should also be on the lookout for swimmers/bathers in the water.

SAFETY EQUIPMENT

SAFETY OF LIFE AT SEA (SOLAS)



All Personal Flotation Devices (PFD's)/ Life Jackets; must be equipped with **LIGHTS** and whistles to enhance recoverability of persons from the water in cases of emergency. In the absence of the required lights, **REFLECTIVE TAPE** will be considered as a temporary measure.

At least one of the vessel's life rings **MUST** have a man overboard light attached to the end of the sixty feet throw line; depending on passenger capacity an additional line may be required.

PERSONAL FLOTATION DEVICE DEMONSTRATIONS:

Boat Captains **MUST**, prior to the vessel's departure, conduct a Safety **BRIEFING** and **DEMONSTRATION** for passengers on donning a PFD or Life Jacket. The various location(s) of the PFDs are to be pointed out, clearly marked and must be easily accessible at all times.



MANNING

The Master of the vessel must ensure that there is sufficient crew to enhance manning/watch keeping duties. The crew manning levels should be determined by high risk factors which include the time of operations, area and social activity onboard and must also take into consideration the structure of vessel.

PROHIBITION AGAINST GOING TO SEA UNDERMANNED

Ref. Shipping Act Cap. 13.27; Section 119

- a) a ship may be detained if found to be undermanned

- b) the Owner or Master of a Saint Lucian ship commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding \$5,000 and can be arrested in the ship is undermanned.

EXCESS PASSENGERS (SHIPPING ACT SECTION 273)

where a vessel exceeds the number of passengers allowed by a Passenger Ship Safety Certificate, issued by SLASPA, the Owner or Master has committed an offence. The aforementioned document issued can affect the insurance.

UNAUTHORIZED PRESENCE ON BOARD SHIP (SHIPPING ACT SECTION 273)

Where any ship is in a Saint Lucian port and a person not authorized by Law –

- a) goes on board a ship without the consent of the Master or of any other person authorized to give consent; or

- b) remains on board the ship after being requested to leave by the Master, a Maritime Officer, a Police Officer, a Port Constable or an Officer of Customs, the person who entered without permission has committed an offence and can be arrested. He/she is liable to a fine not exceeding \$1,000 if convicted.

MARINE POLLUTION (MARPOL) – GARBAGE MANAGEMENT

The Management/Master of the vessel (applicable to vessels carrying >15 passengers) should have onboard documented procedures (Garbage Management Plan) in place to show disposal whilst at sea. The plan must also include written procedures for minimizing, collecting and storing garbage.

NAVIGATIONAL SAFETY

The Master is responsible for ensuring that the music is turned off when transmitting messages to the Lighthouses. This is a standard operating procedure for radio communications. The loudness of the music will clearly affect the clarity of the messages.

Reference is made to Collision Regulations (COLREGS) Rule 5:- every vessel shall at all times maintain a proper look-out by sight and **HEARING** as well as by all available means appropriate in the prevailing circumstances and conditions so as to make a full appraisal of the situation and risk of collision.

NAVIGATIONAL WATCH- SIGHT (COLREGS)

The **SPEAKERS** placed on the vessel should not obstruct the view of the master or crew which can place the vessel at risk of collision. The Master/Owner should also consider and compensate for the stability of the ship upon placement of these speakers.

LOUD MUSIC

The Master should ensure the music is regulated upon entering and exiting the various ports of entry (SLASPA Act , Section 62); **INCLUDING** Anse Cochon, Anse Chastanet, Jalousie, Rodney Bay, Marigot Bay or any other bays. Such conditions are attached to the plying for hire licenses.

SUSPENSION OF LICENSE FOR MISCONDUCT

Contrary to Section 124 of the Seaport Regulations – The General Manager may suspend or revoke the license of the vessel whose owner or any member of crew is guilty of misconduct or a breach or neglect of any regulation.

FISHERIES (SNORKELING LICENSE) REGULATIONS

Vessels conducting tours/rides which include snorkeling, MUST first attain the relevant Fishery License.

Section 39:- "A person shall not operate a snorkeling facility in Saint Lucia without a license issued by the Minister."

Any person who contravenes or fails to comply with any of the provisions of these Regulations commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding \$5,000XCD.

REPORTING OF ACCIDENTS – (SHIPPING ACT SECTION 252 (1) AND (4))

1. When a ship:

- a. has sustained or caused any accident occasioning loss of life or any serious injury to any person;
- b. has sustained any material damage affecting the seaworthiness or the efficiency of the ship, either in the hull or in any part of the machinery of the ship; or
- c. has been in collision with another ship,

the owner or master of the ship shall, within 24 hours after the accident, damage or collision or as soon as possible thereafter, transmit to the Division of Maritime Affairs and Port Police, a report of the accident, damage or collision.

4. The Master or Managing Owner or Agent who fails, without reasonable cause to comply with this section commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding \$2,000XCD.

In light of the above, any accident occurring within Saint Lucian waters must be reported by the Owner or Master of the ship to the Division of Maritime Affairs; this requirement is separate and apart from making a report to the Marine Police Unit. The purpose of this report is to investigate the accident and the ascertainment of its causes and to make recommendations for the prevention of future incidents. This investigation is not to determine liability or to apportion blame.

SECURITY

It is advisable that the Management/Master of the vessel ensures that prior to departure of the vessel there are a minimum of two (2) Private Security Guards or Police Officers on local rides to enhance safety considerations.

Boat owners and boat masters of vessels alike are encouraged to contact the Division of Maritime Affairs for further information.

"FOR SAFER SEAS AND CLEANER OCEANS"

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