STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

1980 No. 540

MERCHANT SHIPPING

The Merchant Shipping (Closing of Openings in Hulls and in Watertight Bulkheads) Regulations 1980

Made - - - -	17*th April* 1980
Laid before Parliament	2*nd May* 1980
Coming into Operation	25*th May* 1980

The Secretary of State, after consultation with the persons referred to in section 22(2) of the Merchant Shipping Act 1979**(a)** in exercise of the powers conferred on him by section 21(1)(*a*), (3)(*d*) and (*o*) and (6)(*b*) of that Act, and of all other powers enabling him in that behalf, hereby makes the following Regulations:—

Citation, interpretation, application and revocation

1.—(1) These Regulations may be cited as the Merchant Shipping (Closing of Openings in Hulls and in Watertight Bulkheads) Regulations 1980 and shall come into operation on 25th May 1980.

(2) In these Regulations the following expressions have the following meanings respectively—

"Breadth of the ship", "bulkhead deck" and "margin line" have the same meanings as in the Merchant Shipping (Passenger Ship Construction) Regulations 1980**(b)**;

"United Kingdom passenger ship" means a passenger ship which is a United Kingdom ship as defined in section 21(2) of the Merchant Shipping Act 1979; and passenger ship means a ship carrying more than 12 passengers, and propelled by electricity or other mechanical power.

(3) For the purpose of these Regulations, a ship shall be deemed to proceed to sea when she leaves a mooring or anchorage at a port for that purpose, and to be at sea until she has been secured at a mooring or anchorage at a port.

(4) These Regulations apply to United Kingdom passenger ships.

(5) The Merchant Shipping (Closing of Openings in Hulls and in Watertight Bulkheads) Rules 1965**(c)** are hereby revoked.

Closure of hull openings, watertight doors, openings in watertight bulkheads, etc.

2.—(1) The master shall ensure that in every ship to which these Regulations apply the contrivances to which this regulation relates shall, immediately before the ship proceeds to sea, be securely closed, and shall be kept so closed while the ship is at sea.

(a) 1979 c. 39. (b) S.I. 1980/535. (c) S.I. 1965/1114.

(2) The contrivances to which this regulation relates are as follows:—

(*a*) Watertight doors below the margin line which are fitted in bulkheads required by the Merchant Shipping (Passenger Ship Construction) Regulations 1980 to be watertight and which divide cargo between deck spaces.

(*b*) All sidescuttles which can be opened and which are situated in any between decks and below the margin line, if any of such sidescuttles have their sills below a line drawn parallel to the bulkhead deck at the side of the ship and having its lowest point 1.37 metres in addition to 2½ per cent of the breadth of the ship above the water when the ship is first afloat in sea water after proceeding to sea: provided, that in fair weather in tropical zones within the meaning of the Merchant Shipping (Load Line) Rules 1968**(a)** (including seasonal tropical zones in the appropriate seasons), this sub-paragraph shall have effect as if "1.07 metres" were substituted for "1.37 metres".

(*c*) Sidescuttles below the margin line which will not be accessible while the ship is at sea, together with their deadlights.

(*d*) Sidescuttles below the margin line situated in spaces appropriated alternatively to the carriage of cargo or passengers, together with their deadlights, when the space in which they are situated is used for the carriage of cargo.

(*e*) Gangway, cargo and coaling ports below the margin line.

(3) For the purposes of this regulation, a contrivance shall be deemed to be below the margin line if the sill of the contrivance is below that line and a sidescuttle shall not be deemed to be closed unless it is locked.

3. The master shall ensure that in every ship to which these Regulations apply every watertight door, not being a door referred to in regulation 2(2)(*a*) of these Regulations, shall be kept closed while the ship is at sea except when it is required to be open for the working of the ship. When open, every such door shall be kept free from obstructions which might prevent its rapid closure.

4. The master shall ensure that in every ship to which these Regulations apply every portable plate closing an opening in any portion of the internal structure of the ship which is required by the Merchant Shipping (Passenger Ship Construction) Regulations 1980 to be watertight, being an opening which is wholly or partly below the margin line, shall be in place when the ship proceeds to sea and shall be kept in place while the ship is at sea, except in case of urgent necessity. In replacing any such plate all reasonable precautions shall be taken to ensure that the joints are watertight.

5. The master shall ensure that in every ship to which these Regulations apply the cover and valve of any ash-shoot, rubbish-shoot or other similar contrivance having its inboard opening below the margin line shall be kept securely closed when the device is not in use.

Drills and inspections

6.—(1) The master shall ensure that in every ship to which these Regulations apply all watertight doors and other contrivances referred to in regulations 2, 3 and 5 of these Regulations shall be opened and closed for purposes of drill—

(*a*) at intervals of not more than seven days; and

(*b*) immediately before the ship proceeds to sea, if the ship is intended to remain at sea for a period of more than seven days:

(a) S.I. 1968/1053, to which there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations.

Provided that nothing in this paragraph shall be taken to authorise the opening, while the ship is at sea, of any watertight door or other contrivance which is required by regulation 2 of these Regulations to be kept closed.

(2) In every ship to which these Regulations apply all watertight doors fitted in transverse bulkheads required by the Merchant Shipping (Passenger Ship Construction) Regulations 1980 to be watertight (not being doors required by these Regulations to be kept closed when the ship is at sea) shall be opened and closed for the purposes of drill once in every period of 24 hours when the ship is at sea, if such doors are both—

(*a*) hinged, or operated by power; and

(*b*) required to be open for the working of the ship at any time while the ship is at sea:

Provided that nothing in this paragraph shall require any bunker door to be opened and closed during any voyage before it has been opened for the working of the ship during that voyage.

7. The master shall ensure that in every ship to which these Regulations apply:

(*a*) all watertight doors;

(*b*) all mechanisms, indicators and warning devices connected with such doors;

(*c*) all valves the closing of which is necessary to make watertight any compartment below the margin line; and

(*d*) all valves, the operation of which is necessary for the efficient operation of damage-control cross-connections

shall be inspected at intervals of not more than seven days by a person appointed for that purpose by the master of the ship.

Entries in official log book

8. The master shall ensure that in every ship to which these Regulations apply entries shall be made in the official log-book recording the following:—

(*a*) the times of the last closing, before the ship proceeds to sea, of the watertight doors and other contrivances referred to in regulation 2 of these Regulations and of the next subsequent opening of such doors and contrivances;

(*b*) the times of the closing and opening, while the ship is at sea, of any watertight door which is fitted between bunkers in the between decks below the bulkhead deck;

(*c*) whether the portable plates referred to in regulation 4 of these Regulations are in place when the ship proceeds to sea, and the times, if any, of the removal and replacement of such plates when the ship is at sea; and

(*d*) the occasions on which drills are practised and inspections made in compliance with the foregoing provisions of these Regulations and whether the contrivances to which such drills and inspections relate are in good working order.

Penalties

9.—(1) A master who contravenes any provision of regulation 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 or 8 of these Regulations, shall be guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £1,000 or, on conviction on indictment, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years and a fine.

(2) Any person who fails to make an inspection as instructed by the master under regulation 7 of these Regulations shall be guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £500.

Norman Tebbit,
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State,
Department of Trade.

17th April 1980.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(*This Note is not part of the Regulations.*)

These Regulations supersede the Merchant Shipping (Closing of Openings in Hulls and in Watertight Bulkheads) Rules 1965. They apply to United Kingdom passenger ships and include such requirements as appear to the Secretary of State to implement the provisions of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea 1974 (Cmnd. 7874) for the closing of watertight doors and other contrivances, for their inspection, for practice drills and for relevant entries in the official log-book.