



Dienststelle Schiffssicherheit BG Verkehr

ISM-Circular No.: 01/2013

Subject: Emergency planning on ships operating in offshore wind farms

Rule reference: ISM-Code 8, SOLAS V, Reg. 34-1, MARPOL Annex I, Reg. 37, Schiffssicherheitsgesetz, Arbeitsschutzgesetz

Remark: The carriage of the circular on board of ships concerned is recommended.

Date: 05.02.2013

Master's discretion

The owner, the charterer, the company operating the ship, or any other person shall not prevent or restrict the master of the ship from taking or executing any decision which, in the master's professional judgement, is necessary for safety of life at sea and protection of the marine environment. (SOLAS V, Reg.34-1)

Obligation to emergency preparedness

Everybody operating a ship has to ensure its safe operation. The organisation of the safe operation of a ship also includes the organisation of ship specific emergency measures which are to be prepared in the way of a risk assessment and which are to be continuously adjusted to the prevailing conditions and requirements.

Based on national regulations (Arbeitsschutzgesetz, Schiffssicherheitsgesetz) as well as international regulations (SOLAS, esp. the ISM-Code, MARPOL) this applies to all kinds of ships on every voyage. For the organisation of emergency preparedness on board of ships the guidelines provided by the IMO are to be considered (Resolution A.852(20) GUIDELINES FOR A STRUCTURE OF AN INTEGRATED SYSTEM OF CONTINGENCY PLANNING FOR SHIPBOARD EMERGENCIES). On ships, for which the ISM-Code is applicable, emergency preparedness is an integral element of the safety management system which is verified periodically within the scope of ISM-audits.

According to the Seeanlagenverordnung the operator of an offshore wind farm has to submit a protection and safety concept within the plan approval process which also includes a concept for emergency planning in the area of the wind farm.

If a ship operates in an area for which a specific concept for emergency preparedness is provided, it should be verified whether this concept may be included in the own concept. It must be the target to use synergetic effects and to achieve the best possible emergency planning. Confusions due to different measures, reporting chains and similar actions must be avoided in any cases.

The respective ship's command has also the responsibility for the safety of the ship, the persons on board and the environmental protection in the area of a wind farm. Insofar, one cannot deny the responsibility of the ship's command to act according to their own professional judgement as well as according to the shipboard emergency plans and national and international requirements (this refers to reporting to the MRCC as well as to BSU, Havariekommando, etc. if applicable).

Especially in the case of construction vessels (Jack-ups) the operational mode of the ship does not matter since the vessel is considered in floating state and in jacked-up state as a ship with valid certificates issued on the basis of ship safety and maritime labour regulations.

Furthermore, it is a normal thing that ships are not solely engaged in a limited area for which a specific emergency concept is available. Ships may also be engaged in different wind farms.

For these reasons the emergency concepts for the specific wind farm can not replace the shipboard emergency plans.

It should also be observed that each ship is integrated in the organisation of search and rescue (SAR). Accordingly, communication with the RCC, which is organized by a coastal state, must be ensured and has to be implemented in the reporting chain for emergencies. This also applies to ships while they are operating in an area of a wind farm for which an own coordination centre for emergencies has been established. In a case of an emergency it should always be reported primarily to the RCC of the coastal state.

In Germany the precaution for emergencies at sea is assigned to the Deutsche Gesellschaft zur Rettung Schiffbrüchiger (DGzRS).

"Im Falle eines Notfalls sieht die Meldekette, die im Rahmen der Schutz- und Sicherheitskonzepte [der Betreiber der Offshore-Windparks, *Anm. d. Verf.*] festgeschrieben ist, vor, dass die Seenotleitstelle der DGzRS, informiert wird." (quote from Drucksache 17/5441, point 7, para. 3 from 11.04.2011 of Deutscher Bundestag).

In summary the following applies:

- The master has the overriding authority on matters of ship safety and environmental protection.
- Every ship has to be prepared for cases of emergency.
- The shipboard emergency plans have to be in coherence with the emergency plans of the offshore wind farm where appropriate. The implementation should be done in the form of additions to the shipboard emergency plans (additional contact points, additional options for assistance and resources).
- The emergency concept of a wind farm may not restrict the ship specific emergency planning.
- The reporting chain for emergencies shall primarily consider the RCCs authorized by the coastal state.

Action required:

Companies concerned are requested to take this circular in consideration when preparing shipboard emergency plans for ships operating in areas of wind farms.

Copies of the ISM Circular can be found at our website:

<http://www.bg-verkehr.de/service/downloads/ship-safety-division/ism/overview-ism-circulars-and-ism-info-mails>

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