

Typhoon season precautions – Hong Kong area

Introduction

Severe weather continues to be a challenge for vessels and their crews. Owners, agents and charterers should remind their ship masters of the need to take precautionary measures during the approach of tropical cyclones. This circular provides information on specified mooring regulations in operation in Hong Kong during typhoons, however, due considerations for proper moorings should be made during typhoon conditions in any location. Similar requirements may also apply in ports other than Hong Kong and owners may be well advised to check for any additional requirements if their vessels call at such ports.



Specifications

Masters, owners, agents and other individuals in control of vessels are reminded of their obligation under Sections 61 and 62 of the Shipping and Port Control Ordinance, Cap. 313 of the Laws of Hong Kong SAR, to comply with any direction of the Director of Marine concerning the safe operation of vessels at the port, or in relation to any matter as to which the Director may give directions under the above Ordinance. All government Class "A" and "B" moorings are available for use during typhoons with the exception of:

- "A" mooring – A17, A29, A35, A39, A43, A46; and
- "B" mooring: B1, B2, B3, B4.

The status of any government Class "A" and "B" moorings is subject to change without prior notice. Up-to-date information can be obtained from the Vessel Traffic Centre, at telephone +852 233 7808, telex 63607 MDVTS, or facsimile +852 858 6646.

Recommendations

- The master of a ship moored at a government mooring may, at his discretion, drop a bower anchor under foot to lessen the tendency to sheer. This should not impair the efficiency of the mooring, although an anchor should not be used during normal weather conditions.
- Masters are reminded that every vessel within the waters of Hong Kong must maintain a continuous listening watch on the VHF radio channel appropriate to the VHF sector in which the vessel is located, or another VHF channel as may be specified by the Vessel Traffic Centre (call sign "Mardep") unless the vessel is released from this obligation by the Centre. The Centre will broadcast tropical cyclone information from time to time when the tropical cyclone warning signals have been hoisted. Masters should listen to local radio broadcasts for advisory weather information bulletins.
- Some vessels have been found to not have adequate manning onboard during periods when tropical cyclone warning signals are hoisted. The attention of masters, owners, agents and charterers of vessels is therefore drawn to Regulation 26(1) of the Shipping and Port Control Regulations, which states that:

"A ship shall, while within the waters of Hong Kong, have onboard at all times such number of crew as is, in the opinion of the Director, qualified and capable of carrying out all duties which may reasonably be required to ensure the safety of the ship having regard to the circumstances pertaining thereto."

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