

The same approach to communications within the Bridge Team should also apply when navigating under pilotage. The Pilot should always be expected to explain instructions exchanged with other ships, pilot boats, tugs and Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) to the Master and Bridge Team in English or a defined working language common to all personnel involved.

1.3 COMPANY POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The ISM Code requires every Company to have an SMS which covers instructions and procedures to ensure safe operation of ships and protection of the environment. This should include practical guidance on navigational safety including:

- Allocation of bridge watchkeeping duties and responsibilities;
- Procedures for passage planning and navigation, including departures from the passage plan;
- Chart and nautical publication update and correction procedures;
- ECDIS procedures (including chart and software updates);
- Procedures to ensure that all essential navigation equipment and main and auxiliary machinery are available and fully operational;
- Ship position reporting procedures;
- Accident and near miss reporting procedures;
- Recording of relevant events and Voyage Data Recorder (VDR) policy;
- Use of Bridge Navigational Watch Alarm System (BNWAS) modes (automatic, on and off) and procedures for ensuring correct operation;
- Bridge access and distraction prevention procedures;
- Procedures for familiarisation and effective handover when crew changes occur;
- Training and drill requirements;
- A system for identifying particular training needs;
- Company contacts, including the Designated Person Ashore (DPA);
- Emergency procedures; and
- Any other information relevant to the safe operation of the ship.

The SMS should identify clear levels of authority and lines of communication between the Master, ship's officers, crew and the Company.

1.3.1 INFORMATION DISTRIBUTION

IMO, flag States, other regulatory bodies and the shipping industry regularly publish new rules, guidance, best practice (including lessons learned from marine casualties) and information intended for ships. The Company should have a clear procedure to forward relevant information to Masters and crews.

The Company should:

- Assess the relevance of the information or requirements to its fleet and operations;
- Implement the requirements or best practice in the SMS, if appropriate; and
- Inform ships of the new requirements or recommendations and seek confirmation of receipt and implementation.

The Master and Bridge Team should:

- Review and implement the new requirements or guidance as soon as practicable; and
- Inform the Company of effective implementation or any difficulties experienced when implementing new requirements or guidelines.

1.3.2 ORDERS

1.3.2.1 Master's Standing Orders

Lines of authority on board should be in accordance with the SMS and operational procedures manuals. The Master should explain particular requirements to the Bridge Team in Master's Standing Orders. These orders should be drafted to support the SMS.

Company and Masters' Standing Orders should be read by all Bridge Team members upon joining the ship, signed and dated. A copy of the orders should be available on the bridge for reference.

1.3.2.2 Bridge Order Book

In addition to Master's Standing Orders, specific instructions will be needed. At least at daily intervals, the Master should write in the bridge order book what is expected of the OOW for that period. These orders should be signed by each OOW when taking over a watch, to confirm that they have read, understood and will comply with the orders.

The OOW should brief other members of the Bridge Team, as appropriate, on any particular activities or requirements for the forthcoming watch.

1.4 MOBILE PHONES AND PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The Company should have a written policy requiring that mobile phones or other personal electronic devices should only be used on the bridge in circumstances approved by the Master.

Notwithstanding occasions when use of mobile phones or personal electronic devices may be permitted, the Company policy should minimise the distraction resulting from such devices by, in general, limiting their use to operationally necessary circumstances.

1.5 BRIDGE INTERNET AND EMAIL

Where internet and email services are available on the bridge, the Company should have a policy to manage their use. Access to internet and email use by bridge watchkeepers should generally be limited to those circumstances where it is necessary for the safe navigation of the ship, in order to minimise distraction that might be caused to the Bridge Team.

Internet access and email on the bridge should usually be restricted to:

- Updates for nautical charts and publications, licences and permits;
- Weather information;
- Navigational warnings; and
- Information relevant to the ship's operations and passage plan.

1.6 EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

The SMS should identify potential emergency shipboard situations, and establish procedures to address these. The actions of the Bridge Team in the event of distress, damage, fire, pollution, personnel accidents, security and cargo emergencies should be included.

A programme of drills and exercises should be established to practise emergency actions and foster effective responses by the Bridge Team in the event of an emergency. This should include practising the ship specific procedures for recovery of persons from the water.⁵

During emergencies the Bridge Team remains responsible for the safety of navigation.

Procedures should be in place to support effective responses to emergencies (see Section 3.20) by ensuring that:

- Initial actions to establish control of an emergency are instigated;
- Communications between the Bridge Team and all personnel involved in an emergency are effective;
- If appropriate, the Bridge Team can establish and maintain communications with SAR services, shore authorities, other vessels and/or aircraft; and
- Emergency responses are reviewed to ensure their continued effectiveness.

All drills and exercises undertaken on board the ship should be recorded in accordance with Company procedures. Mandatory emergency drills should be recorded as required by the flag State.

⁵ Advice can found in ICS Recovery of Persons from the Water: Guidelines for the Development of Plans and Procedures.

CHAPTER 2

PASSAGE PLANNING

2 PASSAGE PLANNING

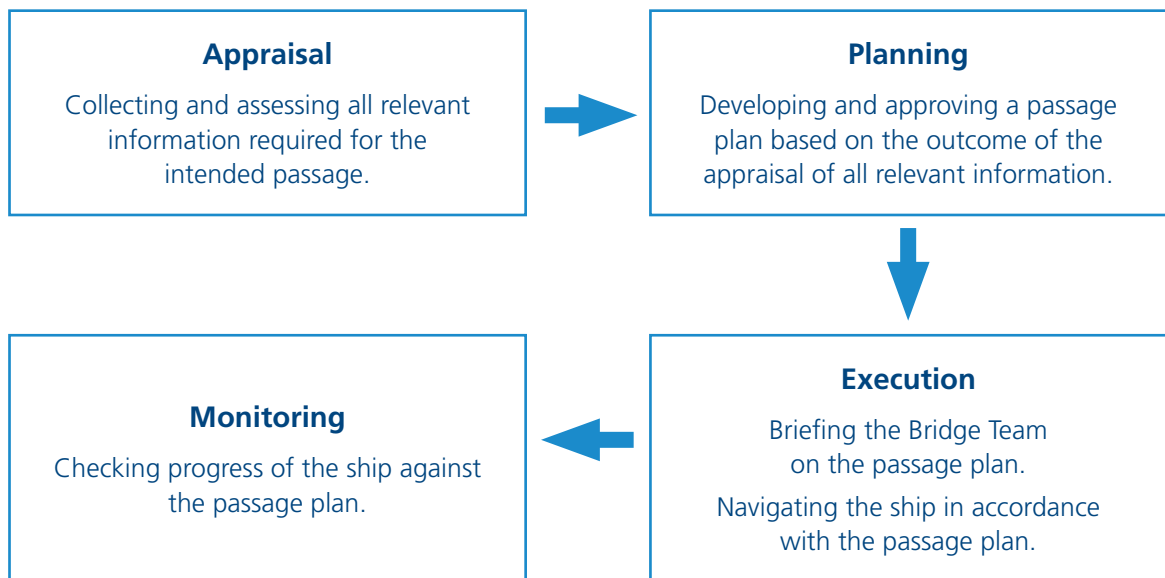
2.1 PRINCIPLES

The purpose of passage planning is to develop a comprehensive navigation plan for the safe conduct of the ship from berth to berth.⁶

The plan for the intended passage should identify a route which:

- Recognises hazards, and assesses associated risks and decision points;
- Ensures that sufficient sea room and depth of water is available;
- Includes appropriate position fixing opportunities;
- Complies with relevant reporting requirements and routing measures for ships;
- Takes into account anticipated traffic and weather conditions; and
- Complies with all applicable environmental protection measures.

The four stages to achieve a safe passage plan are:



2.2 RESPONSIBILITY FOR PASSAGE PLANNING

It is the responsibility of the Master to ensure that the passage plan provides the basis of safe navigation for the intended passage. This responsibility is irrespective of who carries out the task of preparing the passage plan.

The Master should check and approve the passage plan before departure.

⁶ IMO Resolution A.893(21) Guidelines for Voyage Planning. In this Guide the term passage planning means the same as voyage planning.