



Thirteenth Coast Guard District
Commercial Fishing Vessel Safety

Ready for Sea Checklist

- Weather:** Evaluated weather forecast & bar conditions. Vessel & crew can handle safely! Can monitor weather reports at sea.
- Crew:** Trained & drilled in operation of vessel & safety equipment. Work schedule minimizes fatigue.
- Stability:** Scuppers & freeing ports clear. Gear, catch & hatches secured. Vessel not overloaded.
- EPIRB & Communications:** Equipment tested. EPIRB armed & mounted properly. Back up communications ready to go.
- Immersion Suits:** Crew has donned suits to ensure proper fit & good condition. Suits accessible & lights attached.
- Survival Craft:** Capacity for entire crew. Serviced, properly installed, & crew trained to launch.
- PFDs Worn on Deck:** Crew knows to wear PFDs or inflatable suspenders when working on deck.
- Damage Control:** Bilge pumps work. Damage control equipment on board & crew trained in use.
- Fire Fighting:** Adequate number of serviced fire extinguishers on board & crew trained in fire fighting.
- Safety Exam:** I conducted “Ready for Sea” deck walk/safety inspection & determined vessel safe to sail.

[Amplifying Details on Reverse Side](#)

Ready for Sea Safety Factors

WEATHER

- Weather checked and evaluated. Vessel and crew can handle conditions.
- Operable weather forecast comms equipment on board. Forecasts monitored.

CREW

- Drills conducted with every person on board (monthly).
- Work scheduled to minimize fatigue.
- Experienced crewmember checked & corrected deck/pot/fishing hazards.
- Crew knows where the safety gear is and how to use it.



STABILITY/OVERLOADING

- Hatches operable and secured to ensure the vessel is watertight.
- Freeing ports unblocked to allow free flow of water off deck.
- Deck loads & bait shacks properly secured so that they won't break loose.
- Bin boards in place to keep the load from shifting.
- Vessel tanked to reduce free surface effect (fuel, water and catch not freely moving in tank).
- Stability book up-to-date and vessel operated in accordance with guidelines.

EPIRBs & COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT

- 406 MHz EPIRB tested within past 30 days, properly mounted and in the ARMED position.
- Communications equipment operable and adequate for voyage.
- Every person on board knows how to make a distress call and the frequencies to be used.
- Emergency power for communications equipment and/or back up handheld VHF radio on board.

IMMERSION SUITS

- One for every person on board. Stowed in readily accessible location.
- Each person donned to ensure proper fit and able to quickly don in an emergency.
- Suits serviceable--zippers waxed and operable, inflation bladder & lights attached.

SURVIVAL CRAFT

- Large enough to carry every person on board.
- If craft is a liferaft, serviced within the past 12 months.
- Every person on board knows how to launch the survival craft.
- Properly installed so it will deploy in an emergency.

PFD/WORK VEST

- Crewmembers wear flotation [suspenders, float coats, etc.] when on deck in hazardous condition.
- Personal marker lights [strobe, fixed bright, etc] attached to the flotation devices.

DAMAGE CONTROL

- Damage control kits with plugs, wedges, etc. on board and crew trained in use.
- High water alarms operable. Bilge pumps adequate and operable.
- Shaft and rudder post(s) checked to ensure no or only minimal leakage.

FIRE FIGHTING

- Adequate number of serviceable fire extinguishers on board.
- Crewmembers trained to extinguish a shipboard fire.

SAFETY EXAM

- Vessel examined by a Coast Guard dockside examiner or third party organization to ensure vessel is **READY FOR SEA!!!**
- Pre-sail **READY FOR SEA** exam conducted.
- Safety deficiencies corrected and vessel safe to sail.