



## Department of the Marine

# Marine Notice

NO. 9 OF 1993

NOTICE TO OWNERS, MASTERS AND CREW OF CLASS IV,

V AND VI PASSENGER SHIPS

RE: PASSENGER COUNTING AND RECORDING SYSTEMS FOR CLASS IV

V AND VI PASSENGER SHIP OPERATIONS

1. The Merchant Shipping (Passenger Counting and Recording Systems) Rules, 1992 (S.I. No. 390 of 1992) came into force on 14 December, 1992.
2. The purpose of the Rules is to require owners of passenger ships registered in the State operating on Class IV, V and VI certificates to operate a system of counting individual passengers, and crew, recording the total number and ensuring that the Master is informed of the number and, before departure, placing a record of that number ashore or otherwise communicating it ashore, on voyages on which passengers are carried. These Rules, which are based broadly on the Merchant Shipping (Passenger Boarding Cards) Regulations 1989 (S.I. No. 98 of 1989), will enable accurate numbers of passengers on board passenger vessels and craft to be known both by the Master and shore personnel.

3. In framing these Rules, the Department has four objectives in mind :-

- (a) the passenger counting and recording system to be adopted should be simple and clear;
- (b) the proper functioning of the system should be capable of being easily checked and, if necessary enforced by the Department's surveyors without the necessity of arranging a full passenger count as passengers leave the ship;
- (c) the number of passengers on board at any time will always be known both on board and ashore; and
- (d) the requirement to count passengers will enable operators to establish that a vessel's Passenger Certificate limit is not exceeded, and accordingly, that the operator is not breaching relevant sections of the Merchant Shipping Acts.

#### Application (Rule 1)

4. Rule 1(2) makes clear that the principal Rules apply to ships operating on Classes IV, V and VI certificates. (Definitions of the various Classes can be found in the Merchant Shipping (Passenger Ship Construction and Survey) Rules, 1985 (S.I. No. 274 of 1985)). These Rules extend to all vessels within those Classes plying within the State and, those on coastal waters around the State. Passenger Boarding Card Systems are already in operation for all other Classes of vessels.

#### Operation of Passenger Counting and Recording Systems (Rule 2)

5. The passenger counting and recording system referred to in Rule 2 shall apply to all passengers boarding and disembarking from a vessel for a particular voyage or route. Thus it will apply to foot passengers, cyclists and drivers of cars, lorries, coaches and their passengers. A count must be made of each passenger, regardless of whether, for commercial reasons, that passenger has already been issued with a ticket. A count must be taken of passengers remaining on board when vessels on scheduled services halt at landing piers, etc., to embark or discharge other passengers. The count must also include members of the crew carried on a voyage.

6. There is no requirement for a particular owner to use the same passenger counting and recording systems for his different ships, or for any particular ship when operating from different ports or on alternative routes. But for any particular voyage, all the passengers must be covered by the same system. All passenger counting and recording systems for the purposes of these regulations are required to be approved by a Department of the Marine Surveyor on behalf of the Minister for the Marine even though they may conform to one of the suggested systems described in paragraphs 7-13 below.

7. Boarding Cards System (a)

There is for each sailing a book or books of numbered boarding cards. Except for ships certified to carry less than 25 passengers, each book shall contain at least 25 cards. Where the passenger capacity exceeds 100, a book or books with sufficient number of cards should be used. The books shall comprise individually and consecutively numbered cards and counterfoils to facilitate counting. One card shall be issued to each passenger at, or shortly before, the time of boarding. (In the case of a vehicle with a number of passengers, the appropriate number of cards may be issued to the driver of the vehicle or another responsible person, but a passenger count for the vehicle must be undertaken by the crew member issuing the cards). The unissued cards and the numbered counterfoils provide a means of determining the total number of cards issued and this record should be lodged ashore before departure, along with a record of the number of crew carried. Boarding cards may carry the words "BOARDING CARD", and they may be used to draw passengers' attention to safety information.

8. Boarding Cards System (b)

Each passenger is issued, before arriving at the embarkation point, with a boarding card which need not be specific to a particular sailing, but which may have a detachable portion. The detachable portion (or the complete cards) are collected by a crew member at, or shortly before, the time of boarding and provide a means of determining the number of passengers boarding. (For a vehicle with a number of passengers the cards may, as for method

(a), be handled en bloc by the driver or other responsible person, but it remains the responsibility of the shipowner to ensure that the number of persons carried on the vehicle is as stated). It is important for the reliability of this system that cards are issued and collected by different persons, at distinct points.

#### 9. "Clicker" System

The master or a member of the crew must count each passenger as he boards by the use of a consecutively numbering (hand-held) counting device, sometimes known as a "clicker". Passengers are embarked, and are counted individually and a note made of the number boarding. Most scheduled services, on rivers, etc., will, due to their operational nature, call at a number of landing points to discharge and embark passengers. In such circumstances, after the commencement of the voyage, operators must count passengers disembarking at a landing point. That information may be passed by word of mouth, telephone or radio. When such a telephone or radio passenger recording system is in place, operators must establish, where necessary a process whereby the operational centre is advised of the conclusion of a voyage and the disembarkation of passengers. The operation centre, or the designated out-station will record the number of passengers on board by means of a statement in writing, listing, in addition, the number of crew on board, the vessel's name, the landing point, the date, and the time of the transmission of the number of passengers on board.

10. A number of operators may ply to and from unmanned out-stations. In such circumstances, a "post box" system may be utilised. The number of passengers and crew on board, the date and time of sailing and the name of the vessel will be recorded by way of a statement in writing and placed in a "post-box". This system may be utilised when manned out-stations are closed, for example on an evening charter trip.

## 11. Electronic System

By means of a counting method, as described in paragraphs 5 - 10 above, or by electronic means, the master or a member of the crew must count each passenger individually as he boards. A note or an electronic record, must be made of the number boarding. By electronic means, a member of the crew or the master may transmit, before departure, the time, date, vessel's name, landing point, number of crew on board, number of passengers boarding and disembarking at that landing point and the total number of passengers on board at that landing point to the operational centre, where this information will be recorded by a statement in writing. The electronic system employed must be as effective in determining and recording passenger numbers etc. as the systems described in paragraphs 5 - 10 above.

12. Shipowners must advise the Department of the Marine of the arrangements they intend to make to count any passengers remaining on board from a previous landing point or voyage. In the case of out and return excursions, or longer multi-leg voyages, the Department recommends that passengers staying on be asked to report to a designated point on board where they will be given a card for the return journey (which could be a boarding card overstamped to indicate it was for a passenger staying on). Additionally, for multi-leg voyages operators will want to establish methods of counting off passengers. This could be done by physically counting passengers off, by use of a "clicker", or by collecting boarding cards. It will be the responsibility of the shipowner to ensure that the system is effective, and if it is not, the Department may require an effective alternative method such as the introduction of a landing card system. In all such systems, the total numbers on board (including the number of crew) must be recorded or transmitted ashore before departure of the vessel from the landing point.

13. Rule 2(2)(b) is in place in case operators wish to develop other passenger counting and recording systems suited to their route or vessel, such as turnstiles. Such systems must be as effective as those described in paragraphs 7 - 12 above in determining passenger and recording numbers etc. and must be approved by a Department of the Marine Surveyor.

14. Rule 3 requires the "records and documents" relating to the collection of passenger counting information to be retained ashore for one week. Subject to the Minister's approval, documents may be retained for shorter or longer periods, subject to an absolute minimum retention period of 24 hours. For the system described in paragraph 7 and 8, the records and documents will be the unissued numbered boarding cards and the numbered counterfoils of the issued cards. For the system described in paragraphs 9-12 it will be the statements in writing on passenger numbers etc.

15. The relevant records and documents for each voyage are required to be placed in a sealed container, unless the Department's marine surveyor considers that the system presented for approval is such that the sealing of relevant records and documents is not warranted. Shipowners should make their own arrangements, if sealing is required, to ensure that the evidence cannot be tampered with. (The sealed container should carry on the outside a signed statement of the passenger numbers derived from the evidence).

#### Availability of information on numbers on board for rescue services

16. It is important that the rescue services can quickly ascertain the number of persons on board any vessel in an emergency. Accordingly, relevant emergency and rescue services should be informed by each operator of his company's name, address, telephone number and, as the case may be, telex and facsimile numbers. They should also be advised of the routes the operator's boat plies, and how access can be readily obtained at any time to passenger counting records and documents. For example, where there is a post box at an unmanned landing point, the name, address and telephone number of the key holder should be passed on to the local Garda station and, as necessary, the Marine Rescue Co-ordination Centre (MRCC).

17. The MRCC and the local Gardai should also be advised of an operator's out of hours telephone number, name and address, or the name, address and telephone number of the organisation with whom such records are lodged outside an operator's office hours or

the name and address and telephone number of the key holder(s) of post box(es) where landing points are unmanned. Operators with permanently manned organisations should advise, where relevant, the MRCC and other relevant emergency services of this operational position.

18. Operators' attention is drawn to the fact that the Minister will make provision of such arrangements described in paragraph 16 and 17 above a condition of a passenger counting and recording system approval.
19. For the reassurance of passengers, it is recommended that on larger vessels the maximum number of passengers set out in the Passenger Certificate should be posted on public view. When a ship is clearly crowded, operators should announce the numbers on board and the maximum number set out on the Passenger Certificate over the public address system, in order to allay passengers' concern.

#### Exemptions and Approvals

20. Applications for exemptions and approvals should reach the Department of the Marine's Marine Survey Office, 26/27 Eden Quay, Dublin 1, as soon as possible.

Fionan O'Muircheartaigh,  
Rúnaí.

Department of the Marine,  
Dublin 2.

16th March, 1993.