UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Northeast Fisheries Science Center
166 Water Street
Woods Hole, MA 02543-1026

February 13, 2009

MEMORANDUM FOR: Northeast Fisheries Observer Program Observers

FROM: Amy S. Van Atten
Branch Chief, FSB

SUBJECT: Revised Pre Trip Vessel Safety Checklist

Attached, please find copies of the recently updated Pre Trip Vessel Safety Checklist. The start date to begin using this new form (version 3-09, indicated at the top right hand corner) is March 1, 2009.

The revised checklist has boxes to enter letters for "Vessel name" and numbers for "Trip ID", "Hull number" and "Date landed". Additions to the checklist include recording expiration dates for the USCG Fishing Vessel Safety Examination Decal and servicing for EPIRBS, life rafts and hydrostatic releases. There is also a checklist question regarding stability concerns encountered during a trip and an additional place to comment about stability on the back.

These additions are meant to increase personal safety awareness, as well as, to provide enhanced safety information to NEFOP staff and future observers regarding individual vessels.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Mike Tork at (508) 495-2339, Mike.Tork@noaa.gov or Lauren Marcinkiewicz at (508) 495-2212, Lauren.Marcinkiewicz@noaa.gov.

Thank you.

Attachments: Pre Trip Vessel Safety Checklist, version 3-09

Vessel name

3-09

Trip ID

Hull number

Date landed (MM/DD/YYYY) / /

Northeast Fisheries Observer Program

PRE TRIP VESSEL SAFETY CHECKLIST (PTVSC)

For each item place a ✓ in the appropriate box. ***Y*** *= yes,* ***N*** *= no,* ***NR*** *= not required. If the item is required for this particular trip but not on board, or service date is expired, fill in the "No" box.* ***Please provide comments.***

An incomplete PTVSC may affect your bonus.

Y	N	NR	
☐	☐	☐	**Vessel walk through**: note general condition of vessel. ***See back of sheet for examples**
☐	☐	☐	**Current USCS Commercial Fishing Vessel Safety Examination Decal** ***Required for all vessels** Safety Decal Number ____ Exp ____ (MM/YY)
☐	☐	☐	**Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB)** ***Required for all vessels operating beyond 3 miles** Hydrostatic release service expiration ____ (MM/YY) Battery expiration ____ (MM/YY)
☐	☐	☐	**Life raft(s)** Hydrostatic release service expiration ____ (MM/YY) Raft service expiration ____ (MM/YY) ***Required to be sufficient for everyone on board, including observer.** ***Not required for vessels within 12 mi. of coast, ≤3 people and length <36'.**
☐	☐	☐	**Immersion suits and personal flotation devices** ***PFDs are required to be worn by the observer while out on deck** Are there enough for everyone on board? Keep yours easily accessible.
☐	☐	☐	**Radio(s)**
☐	☐	☐	**Fire extinguishers** **Vessels <26' with outboard motor(s) and portable fuel tanks = not required**
☐	☐	☐	**Emergency signaling flares** *Check expiration dates **<3mi. = night light and smoke or 3 day/night flares; >3mi. = 3 parachute, 6 hand held, 3 smoke**
☐	☐	☐	**First aid material**
☐	☐	☐	**Life rings** **Vessels <26' = cushion, >26' = 1 life ring buoy, >65' = 3 life ring buoys.**
☐	☐		Are safety drills conducted on this vessel? **(May include fire, flooding, life raft deployment, abandon ship, etc.) Please ask captain.**
☐	☐		Will one be conducted while you are onboard? **Comments? (on back)**
☐	☐		Will an underway wheel watch be maintained during this trip? **Comments? (on back)**
☐	☐		Were there any stability concerns/issues, either because of behavior or vessel design, during this trip? ***See back of sheet for examples. If yes, please comment on the back.**
☐	☐		Did you provide any additional comments? **If yes, please comment on the back.**

Please provide comments and your signature on the back of this sheet.

*The following is a list of examples that you should/could check while doing a vessel walk through. They are listed here to assist you in determining the relative safety of a particular vessel. The list is not comprehensive, but one that is intended to start you thinking.

- Does the vessel seem well maintained? Is it neat, clean and being maintained by a careful and prepared crew?
- Any visible hydraulic leaks?
- Is the vessel being used for the purpose it was originally designed? Have significant changes been made?
- Do obvious hazards exist? Note potentially hazardous areas/conditions. ALWAYS USE CAUTION AROUND WINCHES.
- Identify water tight doors. Can they be secured in case of severe weather or emergencies?
- Are the hatches or passageways blocked or difficult to get to?
- Does the deck gear appear to be in good working condition? Identify unsafe areas. Note overhead wires or rusted/worn shackles or blocks.
- Is the vessel long overdue for a haul out (excessive growth at waterline or hull paint in poor condition)?
- How often is the bilge pump going on?
- How is the fish hold covered? Is hatch readily available and in good condition? Are there other openings in the deck and are good hatches in place or readily available?
- Would anything prevent you from abandoning ship from the living quarters?
- What are the escape routes from every part of the vessel you might find yourself?
- Visualize egress for all possible scenarios (fire, flooding, capsized, dark, etc.) and mentally note landmarks.
- What are the most combustible items on board and where are they stored?
- Are there any exposed exhaust pipes/manifolds that might pose burn hazards?
- Is there heavy equipment on deck that is not latched down?
- Are there any exposed drive chains, pulleys or belts?
- Would you be able to access the life raft if conditions were icy or the wheelhouse was on fire?
- Wood hulls: Rust stains between planks?(may indicate weak fasteners). Protruding planks or inconsistencies in the hull? (may indicate broken frame/fasteners). Wood rot present? (if yes, likely to be worse in unseen areas).
- Are there safety issues involved with boarding?
- Is the number and size of the scuppers sufficient to be effective? Do they become plugged during fishing practices?
- Is there a station bill posted and is your role clear during all shipboard emergencies?
- Are there emergency instructions, or did the captain (or designee) give safety orientation, explaining the following: survival craft embarkation stations; survival craft assignments; fire/emergency/ abandon ship signals; procedures for rough weather; procedures for recovering man overboard; procedures for fighting fire; essential actions required of each person in an emergency?

***Required to conduct at least 1 of the following: 1) orientation, 2) safety instructions or 3) safety drills.**

*The following are examples of things to consider related to the vessel design or fishing practices in determining general concerns with vessel stability.

- Note the roll period of the vessel. Generally a boat with a quick, snappy roll is more stable than a boat that has a slow or sluggish roll period. A boat that seems to hesitate on its side, before righting, could be unstable.
- Does the vessel list excessively?
- Do the fishing practices involve a pattern of towing heavy bags or dumping the catch to one side of the vessel?

Comments	**Stability**

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU CHECKED *YOUR* PERSONAL SAFETY EQUIPMENT?

Observer signature

Date