

TABLE 96.250—SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM DOCUMENTS AND REPORTS—Continued

Type of documents and reports	Specific requirements
(k) Safety management system document and data maintenance.	(1) Procedures which establish and maintain control of all documents and data relevant to the safety management system. (2) Documents are available at all relevant locations, i.e., each vessel carries on board all documents relevant to that vessels operation; (3) Changes to documents are reviewed and approved by authorized personnel; and (4) Outdated documents are promptly removed.
(l) Safety management system internal audits which verify the safety and pollution prevention activities.	(1) Periodic evaluation of the safety management system's efficiency and review of the system in accordance with the established procedures of the company, when needed; (2) Types and frequency of internal audits, when they are required, how they are reported, and possible corrective actions, if necessary; (3) Determining factors for the selection of personnel, independent of the area being audited, to complete internal company and vessel audits; and (4) Communication and reporting of internal audit findings for critical management review and to ensure management personnel of the area audited take timely and corrective action on non-conformities or deficiencies found.

Note: The documents and reports required by this part are for the purpose of promoting safety of life and property at sea, as well as protection of the environment. The documents and reports are intended to ensure the communication and understanding of company and vessel safety management systems, which will allow a measure of the systems effectiveness and its responsible person to continuously improve the system and safety the system provides.

**Subpart C—How Will Safety Management Systems Be Certified and Enforced?**

**§ 96.300 Purpose.**

This subpart establishes the standards for the responsible person of a company and its vessel(s) to obtain the required and voluntary, national and international certification for the company's and vessel's safety management system.

**§ 96.310 Who does this subpart apply to?**

This subpart applies:

- (a) If you are a responsible person who owns a vessel(s) registered in the U.S. and engaged on a foreign voyage(s), or holds certificates or endorsement of such voyages;
- (b) If you are a responsible person who owns a vessel(s) registered in the U.S. and volunteer to meet the standards of this part and Chapter IX of SOLAS;
- (c) To all foreign vessels engaged on a foreign voyage, bound for ports or places under the jurisdiction of the U.S., and subject to Chapter IX of SOLAS; or
- (d) If you are a recognized organization authorized by the U.S. to complete safety management audits and certification required by this part.

**§ 96.320 What is involved to complete a safety management audit and when is it required to be completed?**

- (a) A safety management audit is any of the following:
  - (1) An initial audit which is carried out before a Document of Compliance certificate or a Safety Management Certificate is issued;
  - (2) A renewal audit which is carried out before the renewal of a Document of Compliance certificate or a Safety Management Certificate;
  - (3) Periodic audits including—
    - (i) An annual verification audit, as described in §96.330(f) of this part, and
    - (ii) An intermediate verification audit, as described in §96.340(e)(2) of this part.
- (b) A satisfactory audit means that the auditor(s) agrees that the requirements of this part are met, based on review and verification of the procedures and documents that make up the safety management system.
- (c) Actions required during safety management audits for a company and their U.S. vessel(s) are—
  - (1) Review and verify the procedures and documents that make up a safety management system, as defined in subpart B of this part.
  - (2) Make sure the audit complies with this subpart and is consistent with IMO Resolution A.788(19), Guidelines on Implementation of the International Safety Management (ISM) Code by Administrations.

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(3) Make sure the audit is carried out by a team of Coast Guard auditors or auditors assigned by a recognized organization authorized to complete such actions by subpart D of this part.

(d) Safety management audits for a company and their U.S. vessel(s) are required—

(1) Before issuing or renewing a Document of Compliance certificate, and to keep a Document of Compliance certificate valid, as described in §§ 96.330 and 96.340 of this part.

(2) Before issuing or renewing a Safety Management Certificate, and to maintain the validity of a Safety Management Certificate, as described in § 96.340 of this part.

However, any safety management audit for the purpose of verifying a vessel's safety management system will not be scheduled or conducted for a company's U.S. vessel unless the company first has undergone a safety management audit of the company's safety management system, and has received its Document of Compliance certificate.

(e) Requests for all safety management audits for a company and its U.S. vessel(s) must be communicated—

(1) By a responsible person directly to a recognized organization authorized by the U.S.

(2) By a responsible person within the time limits for an annual verification audit, described in § 96.330(f) of this part, and for an intermediate verification audit, described in § 96.340(e)(2) of this part. If he or she does not make a request for a safety management annual or verification audit for a valid Document of Compliance certificate issued to a company or a valid Safety Management Certificate issued to a vessel, this is cause for the Coast Guard to revoke the certificate as described in §§ 96.330 and 96.340 of this part.

(f) If a non-conformity with a safety management system is found during an audit, it must be reported in writing by the auditor:

(1) For a company's safety management system audit, to the company's owner; and

(2) For a vessel's safety management system audit, to the company's owner and vessel's Master.

**§ 96.330 Document of Compliance certificate: what is it and when is it needed?**

(a) You must hold a valid Document of Compliance certificate if you are the responsible person who, or company which, owns a U.S. vessel engaged on foreign voyages, carrying more than 12 passengers, or is a tanker, bulk freight vessel, freight vessel, or a self-propelled mobile offshore drilling unit of 500 gross tons or more.

(b) You may voluntarily hold a valid Document of Compliance certificate, if you are a responsible person who, or a company which, owns a U.S. vessel not included in paragraph (a) of this section.

(c) You will be issued a Document of Compliance certificate only after you complete a satisfactory safety management audit as described in § 96.320 of this part.

(d) All U.S. and foreign vessels that carry more than 12 passengers or a tanker, bulk freight vessel, freight vessel, or a self-propelled mobile offshore drilling unit of 500 gross tons or more, must carry a valid copy of the company's Document of Compliance certificate onboard when on a foreign voyage.

(e) A valid Document of Compliance certificate covers the type of vessel(s) on which a company's safety management system initial safety management audit was based. The validity of the Document of Compliance certificate may be extended to cover additional types of vessels after a satisfactory safety management audit is completed on the company's safety management system which includes those additional vessel types.

(f) A Document of Compliance certificate is valid for 60 months. The company's safety management system must be verified annually by the Coast Guard or by an authorized organization acting on behalf of the U.S. through a safety management verification audit, within three months before or after the certificate's anniversary date.

(g) Only the Coast Guard may revoke a Document of Compliance certificate from a company which owns a U.S. vessel. The Document of Compliance certificate may be revoked if—