§ 185.304 Navigation underway.

(a) The movement of vessel shall be under the direction and control of the master or a licensed mate at all times. The master shall operate the vessel keeping the safety of the passengers and crew foremost in mind by directing the vessel in order to prevent a casualty. Special attention should be paid to:

(1) The current(s) velocity and direction of the transiting area;
(2) Tidal state;
(3) Prevailing visibility and weather conditions;
(4) Density of marine traffic;
(5) Potential damage caused by own wake;
(6) The danger of each closing visual or radar contact;
(7) Vessel’s handling characteristics; and
(8) Magnetic variation and deviation errors of the compass.

§ 185.315 Verification of vessel compliance with applicable stability requirements.

After loading and prior to departure and at all other times necessary to assure the safety of the vessel, the master shall determine that the vessel complies with all applicable stability requirements in the vessel’s trim and stability book, stability letter, Certificate of Inspection, and Load Line certificate, as the case may be. The vessel may not depart until it is in compliance with these requirements.

§ 185.320 Steering gear, controls, and communication system tests.

The master of a vessel shall have examined and tested the steering gear, signaling whistle, propulsion controls, and communication systems of the vessel prior to getting underway for a voyage, except that such examination and testing need not be conducted more than once in any 24 hour period.

§ 185.330 Hatches and other openings.

(a) Except when operating on lakes, bays, and sounds, or rivers routes in calm weather, all hatches and openings in the hull, except loading doors, of a vessel must be kept tightly closed except when being used.

(b) All watertight doors in subdivision bulkheads must be kept tightly closed during the navigation of the vessel except when being used for transit between compartments.

§ 185.335 Loading doors.

(a) Except as allowed by paragraph (b) of this section, the master of a vessel fitted with loading doors shall assure that all loading doors are closed and secured during the entire voyage.

(b) Loading doors, other than bow visors, may be opened when operating in protected or partially protected waters, provided the master of the vessel determines that the safety of the vessel is not impaired.

(c) For the purpose of this section, “loading doors” include all weather-tight ramps, bow visors, and openings used to load personnel, equipment, and stores, in the collision bulkhead, the