§ 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 and forecasted visibility and environmental conditions, including wind and waves;

(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.

(b) Masters of vessels not greater than 65 ft (19.8 m) in length must have means available, satisfactory to the Officer in Charge, Marine Inspection (OCMI), to obtain or monitor the latest marine broadcast in order to comply with the requirements of paragraph (a) of this section.


§ 185.315 Verification of vessel compliance with applicable stability requirements.

(a) 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.

(b) In order to fulfill the requirements of paragraph (a) of this section and avoid overloading the vessel, the master must take into account the total weight of passengers, crew, and variable loads.


§ 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 except when being used.