

PROVISIONAL LOCAL VESSELS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Carrying Capacity of Open Deck Pleasure Vessels

Purpose

This paper informs Members that the general method of determining the carrying capacity for open deck pleasure vessels as set out in paragraph 3 will be implemented commencing mid May 2005.

The General Method

2. Members may recall that the general method of determining the carrying capacity for pleasure vessels adopts a simplified approach with the carrying capacity denoted by a numeral determined by the metric measurement of length-times-breath (**L X B**) of the pleasure vessel concerned.

3. Under the simplified approach, a pleasure vessel will be of either the closed deck type or open deck type depending on whether it is provided with an enclosed superstructure or compartment to protect the people on board from the weather and the ingress of seawater. An open deck pleasure vessel is one without an enclosed superstructure or compartment, and its carrying capacity will generally be determined as follows:

Determination of Carrying Capacity	
$L X B \leq 5 \text{ m}^2$	2 persons
$5 \text{ m}^2 < L X B \leq 10 \text{ m}^2$	3 persons
$L X B > 10 \text{ m}^2$	4 persons

However, in case an open deck pleasure vessel possesses a builder certificate or has undergone an inclining test proving that the vessel is safe to carry more persons than the carrying capacity as determined by the above method, then the carrying capacity of the vessel may be determined according to the builder certificate or the inclining test.

4. The above general method was endorsed by the Committee On Boating And Yachting (**COMBAY**) and the Provisional Local Vessels Advisory Committee (**PLVAC**) in 2000. The original intention was to implement the general method under the Merchant Shipping (Local Vessels) Ordinance (**MS(LV)O**), and the method was subsequently incorporated into the Code of Practice (Safety Standards for Class IV Vessels), which was endorsed by the PLVAC in November 2004 and the COMBAY in January 2005.

5. According to the original plan, it was expected that the general method should be implemented in early 2005. However, as the original legislative programme for the MS(LV)O did not materialize, the general method has not yet been implemented.

Present Situation

6. Recently, it has been observed that a number of open deck sampans, with similar hull structure to a "P4 Sampan", have been licensed as pleasure vessels. Such sampans, if licensed as a "P4 Sampan", are limited to carry 4 persons only. However, as the general method has not yet been implemented, these sampans (depending on their actual length and breadth) are permitted to carry up to 10 persons if they are licensed as pleasure vessels.

Necessary Measure

7. The Marine Department is concerned about the safety of passengers on board such open deck sampans licensed as pleasure vessels. To ensure that the present situation can be promptly rectified, the Marine Department considers it necessary to implement the general method described in paragraphs 2 and 3 above as a matter of urgency from mid-May 2005

8. Should Members have any enquiries on this paper, please contact Mr. F. C. CHAN at 2885 8397 or Mr. C. N. CHUNG at 2852 3080.

*Operations Branch
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