

Marine Department's Major Initiatives for Improving Marine Safety Over the Years

Enhancing safety standards onboard

- Requiring all passenger vessels' watertight doors to be fitted with visual and audio alarms
- Specified the requirements of watertight door warning markings
- Improved lifejacket labelling and placement
- Established standards for securing seats to deck
- Installing radar, very high frequency communication devices and automatic identification systems, along with the necessary training requirements for seafarers

Promoting operational safety within the industry

- Introduced the common lifejackets for use by adults and children
- Requiring medical examinations and eyesight tests every five years for coxswains of Class I vessels with a capacity exceeding 100 passengers
- Introduced a new requirement of submission of a medical health certificate issued by an approved medical practitioner for new application or re validation of Local Certificates of Competency/Pleasure Vessel Operator Certificates of Competency, and requiring coxswains and engine operators of Class I vessels with a capacity exceeding 100 passengers and vessels carrying dangerous goods in bulk to undergo a medical assessment every five years.
- Increased the insurance limit of third-party risk insurance
- Enacted the Marine Safety (Alcohol and Drugs) Ordinance which forbids boating under the influence of alcohol or drug in Hong Kong waters
- Implementing safety measures during major events at sea
- Introduced mandatory lookout onboard
- Introduced muster list
- Demonstrating lifejacket donning instructions to passengers

Strengthening industry professionalism and promoting safety culture

- Introduced the Local Safety Management Regime
- Requiring coxswains of passenger vessels to take a refresher

- course every three years
- Introduced a requirement of completing a recognised maritime course as a prerequisite for the Coxswain Grade 3 examination
- Requiring coxswains operating high-speed passenger vessels built before 2007 to hold a high-speed radar licence
- Requiring applicants for Coxswain Grade 1 Certificates of Class I vessels to pass a vessel navigation simulation assessment
- Introduced the Fast Speed Passenger Vessels Endorsement, aiming to improve the navigation practices and emergency preparedness of coxswains and engine operators for Class I vessels with cruising speeds exceeding 20 knots

Improve plan approval and ship inspection standards

- Introduced the tripartite Inspection and Test Plan Scheme for high-risk vessels (ITP)
- Created a dedicated team to carry out plan approval for local vessels
- Introduced courses provided by external parties as part of the basic training programme for all ship inspectors
- Introduced the Naval Architecture Mentorship Scheme
- Established a competency scheme for survey and plan approval staff, ensuring that all tasks are handled by qualified personnel
- Introduced standardised plan approval and survey procedures

Introducing systemic reform of the Marine Department's management and regulatory regime

- Introduced the use of electronic certificates
- Introduced the Licensing and Survey of Local Vessels System to digitalise survey workflow
- Introduced the Life Jacket Management System
- Introduced the E-Survey System