

Department of Transportation and Communications
PUNONGHIMPILAN TANOD BAYBAYIN NG PILIPINAS
(Headquarters Philippine Coast Guard)
139 25th Street, Port Area
1018 Manila

HPCG/CG-8

30 June 2008

**MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR
NUMBER06-08)**

**INTERIM GUIDELINES ON MOVEMENT OF VESSELS
DURING HEAVY WEATHER**

I. AUTHORITY:

RA 5173 as amended by PD 601.

II. PURPOSE:

To prescribe policies and procedures in order to enhance maritime safety especially during the occurrence of a tropical depression or typhoon that makes sea travel dangerous

III. SCOPE:

This policy applies to all vessels that may be affected by the prevailing weather disturbance.

IV. DEFINITION OF TERMS:

- A. Public Storm Warning Signal Nr 1 - is declared if winds of 30-60 kph (approximately 16 – 32 knots) are expected in at least 36 hours.
- B. Public Storm Warning Signal Nr 2 - is raised if winds of greater than 60 kph up to 100 kph (approximately 32-54 knots and above) is expected in the locality in at least 24 hours.
- C. Public Storm Warning Signal Nr 3 - is raised if winds of greater than 100 kph

up to 185 kph (approximately 54-100 knot and above) are expected in at least 18 hours usually accompanied by heavy rains.

- D. Public Storm Warning Signal Nr 4 - is raised if winds of greater than 185 kph (approximately 100 knots and above) are expected in the locality in at least 12 hours usually accompanied by heavy rains.
- E. Danger Sector - is defined as the area where a typhoon may possibly pass during the next 48 hours graphically constructed as follows;
 - 1. From the last known position of the typhoon, draw lines 40 degrees on both sides of the typhoon track.
 - 2. Take the maximum predicted distance that the typhoon travel during the next 48 hours
 - 3. Using the last known position of the typhoon as the center, draw an arc with a radius equal to the predicted distance determined in para E2 above. The area bounded by this arc and the two radial lines drawn in para E1 above is the DANGER SECTOR.
- F. Vessel – Any ship, watercraft or other conveyances used or capable of being used as a means of transportation.

V. POLICY:

No vessel of any type or tonnage shall be allowed to sail except to take shelter, as the situation may warrant, when Public Storm Warning Signal (PSWS) Number 1 or higher is hoisted within its point of origin, the intended route, and point of destination. All vessels that are already underway shall seek shelter when any PSWS is hoisted in its immediate vicinity, along its route, and point of destination. Responsibility and discretion on how to seek shelter and ensure the safety of the ship is left to the ship owner and Master of the vessel. Vessels are allowed to leave port only take shelter and shall depart without passengers and/or cargo onboard.

VI. PROCEDURES:

- A. Every Master or any person in charge of the vessel shall ensure that the latest weather bulletin is received and the track of the typhoon is plotted on the weather chart aboardship.
- B. When PSWS Nr 1 or higher is hoisted in the port where the vessel is located, along its intended route, and at the point of the vessel's destination, the Master or Patron, upon sensing of the danger as a result of a typhoon, shall prior departure, inform the nearest PCG unit, in writing, of

his decision to leave the port (as may be necessary) to take shelter in a safer place without passenger and/or cargo, attesting therein that the decision to leave port is his alone. The PCG shall not allow any vessel to seek shelter with passengers and/or cargo onboard.

- C. The Master or Patron must disembark passengers and cargo before leaving port to take shelter at a safer place. The disembarkation of passengers and cargo shall be supervised by PCG personnel.
- D. If already underway when a PSWS is hoisted in its immediate vicinity, along its route or destination, the Master or Patron shall take shelter and promptly inform the shipowner and the nearest Coast Guard unit.
- E. It is the responsibility of the master or patron of the vessel to take the necessary precautions to avoid danger to his ship and injury to his crew and passengers.

VII. RESPONSIBILITIES:

A. Director, Coast Guard Action Center :

1. Coordinate with PAGASA on the availability of weather bulletin every 0500, 1000, 1700 and 2300 and immediately disseminate same through fastest means of communications to all PCG units with priority to the area directly affected by the typhoon.
2. Plot in the weather chart the track and forecast position of the typhoon, in reference to paragraph 1 hereof.
3. Advise immediately CPCG of any major maritime incident.
4. Continuously monitor all PCG units and take appropriate action on all reported maritime incidents. Recommend to CCGS the activation of the HPCG Battle Staff for Maritime Incidents in case of major incidents.
5. Perform other tasks as CPCG may direct.

B. Coast Guard District Commanders:

1. Monitor and get the entire weather bulletin at all times through HPCG or other available sources.

2. Plot the prevailing weather condition and weather forecast for the next 72 hours at the weather chart. Display the weather chart in a conspicuous area for the benefit of the riding public and of the master and crew of vessels engaged in coastwise trade.
3. Disseminate to all subordinate units the latest weather update.
4. Render situation report to HPCG at interval as indicated:
 - (a) every 12 hours if signal number 1 and 2 are hoisted
 - (b) every 6 hours if signal number 3 is hoisted
 - (c) every 3 hours if signal number 4 is hoisted

(Note: SITREP to include weather and Maritime Traffic Condition.)
5. Monitor distress frequencies (VHF-channel 16, CW-5 khz and SSB-2182 Mghz) particularly during adverse/heavy weather condition.
6. Perform other duties as CPCG may direct.

C. Coast Guard Station/Detachment Commanders:

1. Obtain and monitor the weather bulletin through the District Headquarters, HPCG or other available sources.
2. Plot the prevailing weather condition/weather forecast for the next 72 hours on the weather chart. Display the weather chart in a conspicuous area for the benefit of the riding public and of the master and crew of vessels engaged in coastwise trade.
3. Disseminate the latest weather update to all subordinate detachments.
4. Render situation report to District Headquarters intervals as indicated:
 - (a) every 12 hours if PSWS Nr 1 and 2 are hoisted
 - (b) every 6 hours if PSWS Nr 3 is hoisted
 - (c) every 3 hours if PSWS Nr 4 is hoisted
5. When PSWS Nr 1 or higher is hoisted in Station/Detachment AOR, in a vessel's intended route, or in a vessel's point of destination, request in writing to the appropriate government agency to issue a Hold-Departure-Order to all vessels regardless of type or tonnage. Request the lifting of the Hold-Departure-Order only when no more PSWS is

hoisted in AOR, in a vessel's intended route, or in a vessel's point of destination.

6. Place on record all requests from vessels seeking to seek shelter from the typhoon. Ensure through proper supervision that such vessels leave port without passengers or cargo onboard.
7. Monitor distress frequencies (VHF-channel 16, CW-5 khz and SSB 2182 Mhz) particularly during adverse/heavy weather condition.
8. Perform other tasks as the District Commander and/or CPCG may direct.

D. Shipping Owners/ Operators:

1. Ensure that all vessels are properly informed of the weather update, to include the areas where typhoon signals are hoisted. Installation of latest technological gadgets is encouraged.
2. Disallow Master or Patron to do any vessel movement except for sheltering purposes without passengers and/or cargo onboard especially when typhoon signals are hoisted or expected to be hoisted within the area of origin, along the route and the destination.
3. Should the vessel be already enroute to its destination when a PSWS is hoisted in its immediate vicinity, along its route or point of destination, order the Master or Patron to seek shelter and report location to the nearest PCG unit.
4. Keep track of all weather reports for dissemination purposes as well as monitor all vessels' movement until the typhoon leaves Philippine AOR.
5. Should typhoon signal be lifted by PAG-ASA, order Master or Patron to inform the nearest PCG unit of its intent to continue her voyage until her destination.
6. Inform the Coast Guard immediately of any unusual incident involving maritime safety such as missing craft and/or loss of contact with any of their vessels

E. Masters / Patrons:

1. Obtain and monitor the weather bulletin through PAGASA, company


2. Plot the prevailing weather condition and weather forecast for the next 72 hours on the weather chart.
3. Request in writing to the nearest PCG unit of his decision to depart to seek shelter as may be necessary.
4. Ensure that there are no passengers and cargo onboard when departing the port to seek shelter.
5. Take shelter and inform the shipowner and the nearest PCG unit if a PSWS is hoisted while underway,
6. The overall responsibility for ensuring the safety of the ship, its passengers and crew rests with the Master/Patron at all times.

VIII. RECISSION CLAUSE:

This Memorandum Circular rescinds MC Nr 04-07.

IX. EFFECTIVITY:

This Memorandum Circular takes effect immediately.



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Commandant, PCG