

USCG PASSENGER WEIGHT CHANGES

AS THEY RELATE TO CHARTERBOATS WITH COIs





PRESENTED BY


Capt. Robert F. Zales, II
President


WHY

- ❁ PONTOON WATER TAXI, *LADY D*,
ACCIDENT ON MARCH 6, 2003
- ❁ BALTIMORE HARBOR, 25
PASSENGERS ON BOARD
- ❁ INCLIMENT WEATHER, SMALL
CRAFT WARNING, HIGH WINDS
- ❁ VESSEL CAPSIZED, 5 PERSONS DIED,
4 PERSONS SERIOUSLY INJURED


INVESTIGATION


-  BOTH THE USCG AND NTSB LAUNCHED INVESTIGATIONS INTO THE CAUSE
-  DECEMBER 20, 2004 THE NTSB ISSUED SAFETY RECOMMENDATION M-04-04, WHICH STATES THE CURRENT 140 LB PER PERSON WEIGHT ALLOWANCE FOR OPERATIONS IN PROTECTED WATERS DOES NOT REFLECT ACTUAL LOADING CONDITIONS.

 NTSB RECOMMENDED THE USCG REVISE ITS GUIDANCE FOR MAXIMUM PASSENGER CAPACITY ON SMALL PONTOON VESSELS BY DIVIDING THE VESSEL'S SST WEIGHT BY 174 LBS OR BY WEIGHING THE CREW AND PASSENGERS PRIOR TO A VOYAGE TO NOT EXCEED THE SST APPROVED MAXIMUM WEIGHT



 ON APRIL 7, 2005 THE USCG NOTIFIED THE NTSB THEY CONCURRED WITH THEIR RECOMMENDATION AND THEIR INVESTIGATION OF THE ACCIDENT IDENTIFIED THE SAME ISSUE

- ❖ USCG CHARTERED A WORKING GROUP TO ASSESS THE POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF REGULATORY CHANGES TO A HIGHER PASSENGER WEIGHT
- ❖ ON OCTOBER 2, 2005 THE NEW YORK STATE CERTIFIED MONOHULL PASSENGER VESSEL, *ETHAN ALLEN*, CARRYING 49 PASSENGERS CAPSIZED AND SANK KILLING 20 PASSENGERS
- ❖ THE *ETHAN ALLEN* ONCE HAD A USCG COI BUT IT EXPIRED IN 1981 AND WAS NOT REQUIRED TO BE INSPECTED BY THE USCG AT THE TIME OF THE ACCIDENT

 ON MARCH 7, 2006 THE NTSB CONCLUDED THAT THE USE OF AN OBSOLETE AVERAGE WEIGHT STANDARD FOR PERSONS ON SMALL PASSENGER VESSELS CAUSED THE *LADY D* TO BE MORE SUSCEPTIBLE TO CAPSIZING

 ACCORDING TO THE SYNOPSIS THE COMBINED EFFECTS OF THE EXCESSIVE LOAD CARRIED AND THE WIND AND WAVE CONDITIONS EXPERIENCED AT THE TIME OF THE ACCIDENT CAUSED THE CAPSIZING

PONTOON VESSELS

-  PRIOR TO 1996, THE COAST GUARD PUBLISHED GUIDANCE ON PONTOON VESSEL STABILITY IN ITS MARINE SAFETY MANUAL (MSM) *HTTP://WWW.CG.MIL/HQ/G-M/NMC/PUBS/MSM/*, BUT THERE WERE NO COAST GUARD REGULATIONS SPECIFICALLY FOR PONTOON VESSELS
-  THE MSM ONLY DEALT WITH VESSEL HEELING DUE TO PASSENGER MOVEMENT BUT DID NOT INCLUDE A WIND COMPONENT

- ❖ THE MSM STABILITY GUIDANCE WAS REPLACED WITH REGULATIONS IN CFR TITLE 46, SUBCHAPTER T, IN 1996.
- ❖ THOSE REGULATIONS ALSO DID NOT INCLUDE A WIND COMPONENT BECAUSE PONTOON VESSELS WERE DESIGNED TO OPERATE ON RESTRICTED ROUTES WHERE MILD CONDITIONS PREVAIL
- ❖ IN CONTRAST, THE STABILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL OTHER SMALL PASSENGER VESSELS INCLUDE A MINIMUM WIND HEEL COMPONENT



A COAST GUARD WORKING GROUP, ESTABLISHED IN MARCH 2004, EXAMINED THE STABILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR THAT VESSEL CATEGORY AND RECOMMENDED THAT INFORMATION BE PROVIDED TO OCMI_s AROUND THE COUNTRY TO ENSURE THAT STABILITY TESTS AND STANDARDS WERE BEING APPROPRIATELY AND CONSISTENTLY IMPLEMENTED FOR PONTOON VESSEL




**COAST GUARD GMOC POLICY
LETTER 04-1 0 ENTITLED
EVALUATION OF STABILITY &
SUBDIVISION REQUIREMENTS FOR
SMALL PASSENGER VESSELS
INSPECTED UNDER 46 CFR
SUBCHAPTER S RESULTED FROM
THE GROUPS EFFORTS**

NEW PASSENGER WEIGHT

- ⦿ AFTER EXTENSIVE STUDY AND RESEARCH THE USCG DEVELOPED NEW PASSENGER WEIGHTS FOR USE IN EVALUATING STABILITY TESTS UNDER PSST AND SST
- ⦿ THE WEIGHTS USED IN THE PAST WERE 140 AND 160 POUNDS
- ⦿ THE NEW WEIGHT TO BE USED IS 185 POUNDS


- ❖ THE USCG HAS ISSUED GUIDANCE FOR VOLUNTARY RECALCULATIONS OF THE NUMBER OF PASSENGERS TO BE CARRIED ON VESSELS EVALUATED USING THE PSST AND SST
- ❖ OWNERS AND OPERATORS OF ALL PONTOON VESSELS, AND SMALL PASSENGER VESSELS NOT MORE THAN 65 FEET IN LENGTH, THAT MET SIMPLIFIED STABILITY REQUIREMENTS USING EITHER 140 OR 160 POUNDS, SHOULD VOLUNTARILY RESTRICT THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF PASSENGERS PERMITTED ON BOARD BY:

- ❖ CHANGING YOUR PASSENGER CAPACITY TO A REDUCED NUMBER BY DIVIDING THE TOTAL TEST WEIGHT BY 185 POUNDS
- ❖ CHANGING YOUR PASSENGER CAPACITY TO A REDUCED NUMBER EQUAL TO 140 DIVIDED BY 185 TIMES THE CURRENT NUMBER OF PASSENGERS PERMITTED TO BE CARRIED.
- ❖ IF THE TOTAL TEST WEIGHT WAS BASED ON 160 POUNDS PER PERSON, THE MULTIPLIER MAY BE TAKEN AS 160 DIVIDED BY 185



**WEIGHING PERSONS AND EFFECTS
AT DOCKSIDE PRIOR TO BOARDING
AND LIMITING THE ACTUAL LOAD
TO THE TOTAL TEST WEIGHT USED
IN THE VESSEL'S SST OR PSST**

SUBCHAPTER S VESSELS

 OWNERS AND OPERATORS OF SMALL PASSENGER VESSELS SHOULD VOLUNTARILY REVIEW THEIR STABILITY GUIDANCE AND ENSURE THAT EXCESSIVE PASSENGER WEIGHT IS NOT CARRIED OR THAT AN INCREASED AVERAGE PASSENGER WEIGHT OF 185 POUNDS WILL NOT REDUCE STABILITY BELOW SUBCHAPTER S REQUIREMENTS.

ALL SMALL PASSENGER VESSELS

- ⦿ FOR PASSENGER VESSELS CERTIFICATED FOR OPERATION ONLY ON PROTECTED WATERS, VOLUNTARILY OPERATE ONLY IN REASONABLE OPERATING CONDITIONS WHICH, DO NOT INCLUDE THE CONDITIONS LISTED BELOW:
- ⦿ A SMALL CRAFT ADVISORY IS IN EFFECT;
- ⦿ WIND GUSTS OVER 30 KNOTS (35 MPH);
- ⦿ WAVES OVER TWO FEET; OR
- ⦿ SUSTAINED WINDS OVER 18 KNOTS (21 MPH)




**NOTIFY THE OCM I IF ANY
SIGNIFICANT STRUCTURAL OR
EQUIPMENT CHANGES HAVE BEEN
MADE TO THE VESSEL SINCE THE
STABILITY WAS EVALUATED BY THE
OWNER OR OPERATOR AND
APPROVED BY THE COAST GUARD.
THE OCM I WILL DETERMINE
WHETHER TO ADJUST THE
PASSENGER LOAD ACCORDINGLY
OR REQUIRE A NEW STABILITY TEST**




THE NTSB ALSO SUGGESTED THE USE OF A LOAD MARK TO DETERMINE A MAXIMUM SAFE LOAD CONDITION. THE USCG IS EVALUATING THIS SUGGESTION AND WILL DETERMINE IF THEY ARE FEASIBLE

LATEST USCG ADVISORY

- ❁ FEDERAL REGISTER NOTICE DATED NOVEMBER 2, 2006
- ❁ ADVISORY ACTIONS UPDATED FOR VOLUNTARY MEASURES FOR PRUDENT OPERATION OF ALL SMALL PASSENGER VESSELS
- ❁ THE RECOMMENDATION GIVEN IN THE APRIL 26, 2006, NOTICE TO OWNERS AND OPERATORS OF ALL SMALL PASSENGER VESSELS CERTIFICATED ONLY FOR OPERATION ON PROTECTED WATERS IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS TO FURTHER CLARIFY "REASONABLE OPERATING CONDITIONS":
- ❁ (1) FOR PASSENGER PONTOON VESSELS, VOLUNTARILY OPERATE IN "REASONABLE OPERATING CONDITIONS," WHICH DO NOT INCLUDE: WIND GUSTS OVER 30 KNOTS (35 MILES PER HOUR); WAVES OVER TWO FEET; SUSTAINED WINDS OVER 18 KNOTS (21 MPH); OR CONDITIONS ASSOCIATED WITH A SMALL CRAFT ADVISORY.

 (2) FOR OTHER SMALL PASSENGER, NON-SAILING VESSELS CERTIFICATED TO OPERATE ONLY ON PROTECTED WATERS AND THAT ARE LESS THAN 65 FEET, GIVE SPECIAL CONSIDERATION TO THE "REASONABLE OPERATING CONDITIONS" AS SET FORTH IN ITEM (1) ABOVE WHILE COMPLYING WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF 46 CFR 185.304 OR 122.304.

 THE COAST GUARD EXPECTS THAT SMALL PASSENGER VESSEL OWNERS AND OPERATORS ARE AWARE OF AND FOLLOW THE GUIDELINES PRESENTED IN THE APRIL 26, 2006 NOTICE AS SUPPLEMENTED BY THIS NOTICE. THE COAST GUARD IS IN THE PROCESS OF MORE FORMALLY ADDRESSING STABILITY ISSUES CAUSED BY INCREASES IN PASSENGER AND VESSEL WEIGHT FOR ALL DOMESTIC VESSELS.



**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
CONTACT:**



**MR. WILLIAM PETERS
NAVAL ARCHITECTURE DIVISION
G-PSE-2 COAST GUARD
PHONE 202-372-1372**