

[HPCG MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 02-13, June 05, 2013]

GUIDELINES ON MOVEMENT OF VESSELS DURING HEAVY WEATHER

I. AUTHORITY:

Republic Act 9993 (The Philippine Coast Guard Law of 2009)

II. REFERENCES:

- A. Typhoon Doctrine for the Philippine Maritime Sector, 2009;
- B. PCG Memorandum Circular 02-10 dated 22 January 2010;
- C. PCG Approved Memorandum for SOTC re-Special Areas dated 21 Jan 2010 and HPCG MC 02-10 dated 22 Jan 2010;
- D. Department of Transportation and Communications Department Order 2012-01 dated 09 Jan 2012 entitled "Mandating the Strict Implementation of Precautionary, Safety and Security Measures to Ensure Safe, Fast, Efficient, and Reliable Transportation Services, the Immediate Implementation of Quick Response Protocols, and the Immediate Investigation of Transformation-Related Incidents".
- E. The Philippine Coast Pilot, 6th Edition 1997

III. PURPOSE:

This Memorandum Circular (Circular) prescribes the policies on movement of vessels during the occurrence of a tropical depression, storm or typhoon in the Philippine Area of responsibility to prevent the occurrence of maritime accident and damage to the marine environment.

IV. SCOPE:

This Circular shall apply to all vessels operating within the territorial jurisdiction of the Republic of the Philippines except tugboats purposely used in assisting vessels in docking or undocking to or from berthing piers or wharves, government-operated vessels and commercial vessels called upon by the PCG to assist in a specific search and rescue operation.

V. DEFINITION OF TERMS:

For purposes of this Circular, the following words and phrases shall be defined as:

- A. Detention – the act of preventing the ships from leaving the port due to violations or conditions presenting danger to the ships or persons on board and/or harm to the marine environment.
- B. MARINA – Maritime Industry Authority.

C. PAGASA – Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration.

D. PCG – Philippine Coast Guard

E. PPA – Philippine Ports Authority.

F. Philippine Area of Responsibility – designated area in Northwestern Pacific where PAGASA is tasked to monitor tropical cyclone occurrences. It is bounded by the black lines joining the following points: 25°N – 120°E, 25°N – 135°N- 135°E, N-135°E, 5°N–115°E, 15°–115°E and 21°N-120°E.

G. Public Storm Warning Signal (PSWS) Nr. 1 – declared if winds of 30-60 kph (approximately 16-32 knots) are expected in the locality in at least 36 hours.

H. Public Storm Warning Signal (PSWS) Nr. 2 – raised if winds of 61 kph up to 100 kph (approximately 35-54 knots) are expected in the locality in at least 24 hours.

I. Public Storm Warning Signal (PSWS) Nr. 3 – raised if winds of 101 kph up to 185 kph (approximately 54-100 knots) are expected in the locality in at least 18 hours.

J. Public Storm Warning Signal (PSWS) Nr. 4 – raised if winds of greater than 185 kph (approximately 100 knots and above) are expected in the locality in at least 12 hours.

K. Public Storm Warning Signal (PSWS) Sector - refers to areas covered by PSWS Nr.1 or PSWS Nr. 2 and higher which are shown with corresponding color codes, as provided in PAGASA website.

L. Route - refers to a way or course, taken or planned to be taken, in navigating from a point of origin to point of destination, (navigational route) as differentiated from the word "route" used in MARINA issued franchises that refers to ports of call.

M. Short Distance Voyages – refers to those voyages where the distance from the point of origin to the point of destination shall not exceed four kilometers or 2.16 NM or voyages from the point of origin to the point of destination can be completed within thirty minutes or voyages from the point of origin, route and point of destination, altogether are within the line of sight.

N., Special Areas – refers to areas within bays and rivers or enclosed by natural covers or sheltered zones whose natural topographical characteristics makes its areas less vulnerable to adverse effects of the prevailing weather condition. The following are declared as Special Areas:

1. Iloilo Strait:

At Iloilo side south edge of Mansaya River or at coordinates Lat 10°42.2 min Lat 122°35.3min E; West edge of Ortiz Wharf or at coordinates Lat 10°41.4 min N Long 122°34.4 min; at Guimaras side at Estapa Point or at coordinates Lat 10°42.4min N Long 122°37min E and at Nagaba Point at coordinates Lat 10°39.9 min N Long 122°35min E.

2. Tanon Strait between Boracay and Caticlan traditionally used as routes between these areas bounded by the following coordinates:

Point 1: Lat 11°56min 30sec N; Long 121°55min 40sec E.
Point 2: Lat 11°56min 22sec N; Long 121°57min 09sec E.
Point 3: Lat 11°55min 40sec N; Long 121°57min 03sec E.
Point 4: Lat 11°56min 44sec N; Long 121°57min 27sec E.
Point 5: Lat 11°56min 38sec N; Long 121°57min 33sec E.
Point 6: Lat 11°56min 13sec N; Long 121°57min 32sec E.

3. Pier 3, Port of Cebu to Muelle Osmena Pier, Lapu-lapu City route bounded by the following coordinates:

Point 1: Lat 10°18min 51.43sec N; Long 123°56min 55.52sec E.
Point 2: Lat 10°18min 47.18sec N; Long 123°56min 49.90sec E.
Point 3: Lat 10°17min 48.98sec N; Long 123°54min 37.10sec E.
Point 4: Lat 10°17min 53.14sec N; Long 123°54min 39.57sec E.

4. Mukas – Ozamis Route

Point 1: Lat 8°06min 14.77sec N; Long 123°50min 27.20sec E.
Point 2: Lat 8°06min 27.20sec N; Long 123°50min 32.01sec E.
Point 3: Lat 8°08min 21.00sec N; Long 123°50min 37.46sec E.
Point 4: Lat 8°08min 53.14sec N; Long 123°50min 50.98sec E.

5. Km. 11 – Villarica Pier Route along Pakiputan Strait between Davao City and Island Garden City of Samal bounded by the following coordinates:

Point 1: Lat 7°08min 04.49sec N; Long 125°39min 48.83sec E.
Point 2: Lat 7°08min 02.65sec N; Long 125°41min 02.71sec E.
Point 3: Lat 7°08min 15.05sec N; Long 125°41min 15.01sec E.
Point 4: Lat 7°08min 17.09sec N; Long 125°39min 61.08sec E.

6. Sasa Barge Wharf – Maewess Babak Wharf Route bounded by the following coordinates:

Point 1: Lat 7°07min 59.69sec N; Long 125°39min 48.38sec E.
Point 2: Lat 7°07min 16.10sec N; Long 123°40min 21.03sec E.
Point 3: Lat 7°07min 29.10sec N; Long 123°40min 34.03sec E.
Point 4: Lat 7°07min 50.69sec N; Long 123°39min 58.83sec E.

7. All other areas as the Commandant, PCG may declare as Special Areas.

O. Tropical Cyclone – refers to a type of low pressure system which generally forms in the tropics and composed of a large, rotating area of clouds, wind and thunderstorm activity. It begins as tropical depression (TD), further intensifies to a tropical storm (TS), then becomes a typhoon (TY) when its maximum sustained winds reach more than 119 kph.

P. Tropical Depression (TD) – A tropical cyclone with maximum sustained 1- minute mean surface winds of 35 to 64 kph. The storm begins to assume the familiar spiral appearance with increasing cyclonic wind flow around the low-level circulation center.

Q. Tropical Storm (TS) – A tropical cyclone with maximum 1-minute mean sustained surface winds in the range of 65 to 118 kph, inclusive. The developing bands of

thunderstorms contribute additional heat and moisture, further intensifying the system.

R. Typhoon (TY) – A tropical cyclone with maximum sustained 1-minute mean surface winds of greater than 119 kph. About this time, the clouds free eye typically forms in the inner region of the tropical cyclone until one or more of the necessary conditions described earlier is either lost or undergoes a significant change, the system will continue to develop and sustain itself.

S. Vessel – refers to any ship, watercraft or other conveyance used or capable of being used as means of transportation.

T. Mandatory Sheltering – the vessel, while underway after departing with no prohibition under a certain PSWS, is automatically obligated to proceed to the nearest port or sheltering area in the event a PSWS is raised along its routes or destination that already disallows the vessel to continue its regular voyage.

VI. POLICIES:

A. 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. It is the responsibility the ship owner/operator and Master/Patron of the vessel on how to seek shelter and ensure the safety of the ship. Vessels are allowed to leave port only to take shelter and shall depart without passengers and/or dangerous cargo onboard.

B. Due to the distinct geographical characteristics of certain areas in the country, effects of any particular typhoon signal may vary from one place to another whenever PSWS Number 1 is hoisted or declared by PAGASA. Vessels engaged in "Short Distance Voyages" as defined under paragraph V (M) within "Special Areas" as enumerated under paragraph V (N) may sail when PSWS Nr. 1 is hoisted within its point of origin or route or point of destination only when all the following conditions are strictly satisfied.

1. Voyage shall only be from sunrise to sunset, the ship must arrived at the point of destination 30 minutes before sunset.

2. Sea condition is calm to gentle breeze with the prevailing wind speed in the area is not more than 30 kph or 16 knots based on PAGASA or other reputable sources;

3. Rain showers in the point of origin, route or destination should be light rains with the rate of fall is from trace to 2.5mm per hour;

4. There is good visibility. The route and area of destination is seen by the naked eye from the point of origin;

5. Duly licensed passenger vessels shall only carry passengers not exceeding 50% of its authorized passenger capacity as per MARINA issued Passenger Ship Safety Certificate (PSSC);

6. For passenger boats with open decks, passenger, including children and crew shall wear lifejackets prior to the departure of vessel and until disembarkation at the