

**[HPCG MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 02-10,
January 22, 2010]**

**INTERIM GUIDELINES ON MOVEMENT OF VESSELS AND
MOTORBOATS ENGAGED IN SHORT DISTANCE VOYAGES IN
SPECIAL AREA**

I. AUTHORITY:

RA 5173 as amended by PD 601

II. PURPOSE:

To prescribe policies and procedures in the movement of vessels and motorboats during fair weather condition in the locality despite being declared to be under Public Storm Warning Signal Number 1 by PAGASA.

III. APPLICATION:

This circular shall apply to vessels and motorboats of 1,000 GT and below engaged in "Short Distance Voyages" operating in "Special Areas" within the territorial jurisdiction of the Republic of the Philippines.

IV. EXEMPTIONS:

- A. Tugboats purposely used in assisting vessels in docking or undocking to or from berthing piers or wharves;
- B. Government-operated vessels and motorboats used for non-commercial purposes; and
- C. Vessels and motorboats called upon by the PCG to assist in a specific search and rescue operation.

V. DEFINITION OF TERMS:

- A. **MARINA** – Maritime Industry Authority
- B. **Motorboat** – under this circular, refers to traditionally designed and built wooden hull watercrafts capable of being used as means of transportation.
- C. **PAGASA** - Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration

D. **PCG** – Philippine Coast Guard

E. **PPA** – Philippine Ports Authority

F. **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.

G. **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.

H. **Route** – as used in this circular, is defined as a way or course, taken or planned to be taken, in navigating from a point of origin to a point of destination, as differentiated from the word “route” used in MARINA issued franchises.

I. **Short Distance Voyages** – for the purpose of this circular, refers to those voyages conforming to all the characteristics described below:

- i. distance from the point of origin to the point of destination shall not exceed four (4) kilometers (2.16 nautical miles);
- ii. voyage from the point of origin to the point of destination can be completed within thirty (30) minutes maximum; and
- iii. the point of origin, route and point of destination, altogether, are within a line of sight.

J. **Special Areas** – as used in this circular, are areas within bays and rivers or enclosed by natural coves or sheltered zones whose natural topographical characteristic makes its sea area less vulnerable to adverse effects of the prevailing weather condition. Initially, the following are declared special areas under the purview of this Circular:

- i. Iloilo Strait bounded by the following points: On Iloilo side south edge of Mansaya River or at coordinates Lat 10 deg 42.2 mins N, Lat 122 deg 35.3 mins E; West edge of Ortiz Wharf or at coordinates Lat 10 deg 41.4 min N Long 122 deg 34.4 E; on Guimaras side at Estampa Point or at coordinates Lat 10 deg 42.4 min N Long 122 deg 37 mins E and Nagaba Point at coordinates Lat 10 deg 39.9 mins N Long 122 deg 35 mins E.

- ii. Tanon Strait between Boracay and Caticlan traditionally used as routes between said areas bounded by the following coordinates:

Point 1: Lat 11 degs 56 mins 04 sec N and Long 121 degs 56 mins 01 sec E;

Point 2: Lat 11 degs 55 mins 09 secs N and Long 121 degs 56 mins 09 secs E;

Point 3: Lat 11 degs 56 mins 05 secs North and Long 121 degs 57 mins 05 secs E;

Point 4; Lat 11 degs 57 mins 02 secs North and Long 121 degs 56 mins 08 secs E.

- iii. All other areas as the Commandant, PCG may direct.

- K. **Vessel** – under this circular, refers to any ship, watercraft or other conveyances used or capable of being used as means of transportation.

VI. GENERAL POLICY:

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 it is hoisted or declared by PAGASA. As such, responsibility and discretion is left to the vessel or motorboat owners/ masters / patrons/ boat captains engaged in "Short Distance Voyages" in "Special Areas" the decision to sail when PSWS Nr. 1 is hoisted in any of its origin, or route or destination. It is expected that they will act according to their best judgment in order not to expose their crew and passengers to unnecessary risks and prevent the loss of lives and properties

VII. SPECIFIC POLICIES:

- A. Vessels and motorboats engaged in "Short Distance Voyages" within "Special Areas", 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:

- i) Voyage shall only be from sunrise to sunset;
- ii) Sea condition is not rough;
- iii) Prevailing wind speed in the area is not more than 30 kph or 16 knots based on PAGASA or other reputable sources;
- iv) Rain showers in the point of origin, route or destination should not be Moderate or Heavy;
- v) There is good visibility. The route and area of destination is seen by the naked eye from the point of origin;
- vi) Duly licensed passenger vessels or motorboats shall only carry passengers not exceeding 75% of its authorized passenger capacity as per MARINA issued Passenger Ship Safety Certificate (PSSC);
- vii) For passenger boats with open decks, passengers and crew shall wear lifejackets prior to the departure of vessel or motorboat and until disembarkation at the point of destination;
- viii) Masters and Boat Captains shall ensure that maximum precautionary measures shall be observed in ensuring the proper lashing and stowage of cargoes loaded onboard the vessel or motorboat prior departure;
- ix) There shall be a designated look-out and standby Emergency Boat provided by any of the Local Government Unit(s) or Shipping Company or Motorboat Association in the origin and/or destination in case assistance will be needed;
- x) There shall be a credible communication link between vessels and motorboats and the designated standby Emergency Boat and the PCG.

- B. Vessels and motorboats which cannot comply with paragraph A shall not sail, except to take shelter.

- C. Vessels and motorboats sailing for the purpose of taking shelter shall depart without passengers. Cargoes already loaded onboard the vessel may be permitted to remain onboard provided that maximum precautionary measures shall be observed by ensuring that proper lashing and stowage are strictly followed.
- D. It is the decision and responsibility of the Master/ Patron/ Boat Captain and ship/motorboat owner to ensure the safety of the ship/ motorboat and crew whenever they decide to take shelter.
- E. In no way shall ship/ motorboat owners and Masters/ Patrons/ Boat Captains of vessels depart from the intent of this circular by violating the objective of the provision hereof on taking shelter.
- F. Ship/ motorboat owners and Masters/ / Patrons/ Boat Captains shall exercise extraordinary diligence required by law for common carriers in ensuring the safety of life and property at sea.

VIII. PROCEDURES:

- A. Every Master/ Patron/ Boat Captain or any person in charge of a vessel/ motorboat, including the owner/ operator shall consider the safety of life at sea to take precedence at all times.
- B. The Master/ Patron/ Boat Captain or any person in charge of a vessel/ motorboat shall ensure that the latest weather bulletin is obtained and the track of the typhoon and the PSWS Sectors are plotted on the weather chart.
- C. It is the responsibility of the Master/ Patron/ Boat Captain of the vessel/ motorboat to take all the necessary precautions to avoid danger to his ship/ boat and injury to his crew and passengers.

IX. RESPONSIBILITIES:

A. Director, PCG Action Center/ Command Duty Officer:

1. Coordinate with PAGASA on the availability of weather bulletin every 0500H, 1100H, 1700H and 2300H or whenever weather updates from PAGASA are available and immediately disseminate same through fastest means of communications to all PCG units, prioritizing the areas directly affected or may be affected by the typhoon.
2. Plot in the weather chart the track, forecast position of the typhoon and PSWS Sectors in reference to paragraph 1 hereof.
3. Immediately advise the Commandant, PCG of any major maritime incident.