U.S. Coast Guard

VOLUNTARY SAFETY INITIATIVES and GOOD MARINE PRACTICES CHECKLIST and EXAMINATION GUIDE

Name of Vessel		
Official Number		
Date Completed	**Location**	
Vessel Type *check all that apply*		
☐ Tender	☐ Troll	☐ Purse Seine ≤58 ft
☐ Jig	☐ Crab/Pot/Trap	☐ Purse Seine >58 ft
☐ Multi-Rig	☐ Trawler	☐ Other:_____
☐ Longliner	☐ Gillnet	
Build Date *(delivery date)*	**Keel Laid Date**	
Modification(s) - Date and Description		
Overall Length (in feet)	**Registered Length (feet)**	
Gross Tonnage	**Net Tonnage**	
Maximum Crew Allowed		

Use of VSI-GMP Fishing Vessel Checklist and Exam Guide

This checklist and examination guide is intended to be used as a job aid by Coast Guard Examiners and owners/operators of commercial fishing vessels who engage in this Voluntary Safety Initiative (VSI).

The VSI was developed through a collaboration of the Coast Guard, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), vessel owners, members of the fishing industry, and the Commercial Fishing Safety Advisory Committee (CFSAC) in advance of the possible establishment of an Alternate Safety Compliance Program (ASCP).

The Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2010 and Marine Transportation Act of 2012 ("the Acts") extended classification requirements to certain new Commercial Fishing Vessels. Existing vessels that are 50 feet or more in overall length, operate more than 3 nautical miles from shore, and are 25 years of age or more, may be required to comply with an ASCP that may be developed by the Coast Guard. However, that compliance will require implementing regulations that are under consideration for amending 46 CFR Part 28.

Although the safety measures and practices listed in this document are to be focused primarily toward vessels 50 feet or greater in overall length, operating more than three nautical miles from shore, and that are more than 25 years of age, these safety initiatives and good marine practices should be considered for ALL commercial fishing vessels where reasonable and practicable.

Fishing organizations representing specific fleets should feel free, and are encouraged, to work with Coast Guard District Commercial Fishing Vessel Safety (CFVS) Coordinators to determine the safety measures in this document that may, or may not, be applicable to their fleet. A fleet-specific safety initiative with good marine practices may be developed for their fleet(s) in lieu of this document and presented to the Coast Guard for consideration and acceptance.

Involved Parties & General Information:

Vessel's Representatives:
Phone Numbers:

Owner-Listed on DOC (if applicable)
☐ No Change

Operator:
☐ No Change

1. Certificates, Documents and Records

	YES	NO	N/A	Action
1.A.	☐	☐	☐	Valid CFVS Decal and Certificate of Compliance (COC)
1.B.	☐	☐	☐	Safety and survival equipment maintenance and inspection records on board for 3 years. (See Section 9 of this document).
1.C.	☐	☐	☐	Record of instruction, emergency drills and safety orientation retained for 3 years. ☐ Name of qualified Drill Conductor (should be a member of the crew), ☐ Date and type of training/orientation/drill ☐ Names of participants.
Notes:				

2. Lifesaving Equipment

	YES	NO	N/A	Action
2.A.	☐	☐	☐	CG Approved strobe-type personal marker light attached to required immersion suits and PFDs.
2.B.	☐	☐	☐	Survival craft ensures no part of an individual is immersed in water. Type: ☐ Inflatable Buoyant Apparatus ☐ Rigid Liferaft ☐ Inflatable Liferaft ☐ Other: _____
2.C.	☐	☐	☐	Effective man overboard recovery device that is appropriate for the vessel *if more than 1 POB.* Device: _____
2.D.	☐	☐	☐	Single-operator vessel has additional or alternate lifesaving devices. Ex: engine kill device, re-boarding ladder, personal locator beacon (PLB). Devices:_____ _____
Notes:				

3. Communications Equipment

	YES	NO	N/A	Action
3.A.	☐	☐	☐	GPS-Enabled EPIRB *upgrade at battery expiration or when servicing is required*
3.B.	☐	☐	☐	Each DSC-capable radio is programmed with MMSI and connected to GPS
3.C.	☐	☐	☐	MAYDAY placard or written emergency communication procedures should be posted in a visible location in the vicinity of the primary radio in the pilot house or at the operating station.
Notes:				

4. Deck Safety Equipment

	YES	NO	N/A	Action
4.A.	☐	☐	☐	Weather deck surface should be equipped with material, or have a device, that will help prevent personnel slips and it should be maintained in good condition.
4.B.	☐	☐	☐	Each person while on an open deck *(especially at night, when alone, when gear is being set/hauled, crossing hazardous bars, or when other hazards exist)*, should wear a flotation device of sufficient buoyancy to keep the wearer afloat. ☐ PLB attached to flotation *single-operator vessels*
4.C.	☐	☐	☐	Guards for exposed hazards *beyond those listed in 46 CFR 28.215* ☐ Emergency stop devices ☐ Winch entanglement prevention ☐ Others:
4.D.	☐	☐	☐	Hardhats or other appropriate cranial protection worn while working in the vicinity of operating overhead equipment, gear or machinery
Notes:				

5. Fire Safety Equipment and Practices

	YES	NO	N/A	Action
5.A.	☐	☐	☐	Fire Prevention assessments and inspections *performed prior to vessel operation and at least once a week thereafter:* ☐ Hot surface lagging/insulation is not saturated with oil or fuel; ☐ Potential ignition sources are corrected *ex: loose electrical connections, exposed hot surfaces or conductors;* ☐ Flammables and combustibles are safel segregated from possible ignition sources and placed in appropriate storage containers; ☐ Fuel, oil or hydraulic leaks are repaired; ☐ Bilge is free of excessive fuel, oil and volatile vapors; ☐ Stoves and electrical heaters are guarded and their vicinity is clear and free of combustibles and flammables; ☐ Hazardous and flammable material storage areas/containers have separate ventilation and an appropriate fire extinguisher in the immediate area; ☐ Fuel vent flame screens of at least 30 x 30 mesh are installed, if possible, and are in good condition; and ☐ Where installed, engineroom vent closures are functional.
5.B.	☐	☐	☐	☐ Smoke detector (UL-217 standard or equivalent) located in all accommodation and regularly manned spaces. *Heat detectors could be substituted in the galley and engine room* ☐ Carbon monoxide detectors in accommodation spaces adjacent to spaces with internal combustion engines and exhaust stacks.
5.C.	☐	☐	☐	If equipped with a deck water/fire pump, there should be sufficient hose(s), fitted with an appropriate nozzle, to reach any part of the vessel
Notes:				

6. Machinery and Electrical Safety

	YES	NO	N/A	Action
6.A.	☐	☐	☐	Exhaust systems should be free of leaks within any internal spaces.
6.B.	☐	☐	☐	Electrical systems and wiring should be maintained to ensure: ☐ Conductor should not be exposed, unless so designed; ☐ Electrical panels are covered and connections not left exposed; ☐ Battery(ies) are secured from movement and covered or guarded; ☐ All cable and wiring has stranded copper conductors with sufficient current carrying capacity for the circuit for which they are used; ☐ New wiring installations or repairs are in accordance with 33 CFR 183 or other standard established for marine use; ☐ Extension cords are limited to temporary applications; and ☐ All permanently installed electrical equipment is hard-wired to the power source with over-current protection, where possible.
Notes:				

7. Material Condition

	YES	NO	N/A	Action
7.A.	☐	☐	☐	Existing watertight/weathertight closures should be maintained and function as designed: ☐ Dogs/closing devices are operable; ☐ Gaskets are in place and not painted or deteriorated; and ☐ Knife edges of closures provide a proper seal and are periodically tested.

	YES	NO	N/A	Action
7.B.	☐	☐	☐	Any penetration of a watertight bulkhead or deck should be installed in such a manner to maintain the watertight integrity of the bulkhead or deck.
7.C.	☐	☐	☐	A watertight bulkhead or deck or closure that has been altered since installed should be restored to a condition that ensures its watertight integrity.
7.D.	☐	☐	☐	Through-hull fittings ☐ Shut-off valve close to the hull penetration ☐ Material compatible with the hull and suitable for marine use.
7.E.	☐	☐	☐	An internal survey should be conducted twice in a 5 year period (or as required by your insurance underwriter), not to exceed 3 years between surveys. *Vessels operating on the Great Lakes can conduct their internal survey on the same schedule as their out of water survey described in section G below.* The survey should be conducted by a qualified marine surveyor, if reasonably available, from an organization accepted by the CG. Otherwise, an owner/operator may conduct and certify the survey was performed. The survey should include verifying the structural integrity/condition of the: ☐ Frames and stiffeners; ☐ Floors and decks; ☐ Shelves, brackets, clamps; ☐ Bulkheads; ☐ Ventilation; ☐ Hull openings and closures; ☐ Deadlight covers in place below weather deck; ☐ Deck openings and closures; ☐ Sills, combings; ☐ Piping; and ☐ Scuppers/freeing ports.
Notes:				

	YES	NO	N/A	Action
7.F.	☐	☐	☐	Deficiencies found during the internal survey should be corrected to the satisfaction of the attending marine surveyor or vessel owner within a stipulated time frame.
7.G.	☐	☐	☐	An out of water survey should be conducted by a qualified marine surveyor from an organization accepted by the Coast Guard or by the vessel owner. 1. Wood boats should be surveyed twice in any 5 year period not to exceed 3 years between surveys. 2. All other vessel types should be surveyed at least once every 5 years. 3. The following items should be examined to verify their structural integrity and service condition: ☐ Propeller; ☐ Shafts/seals; ☐ Sea valves; ☐ Rudders; ☐ Side shell/planking; and ☐ Tanks, voids, cofferdams, and chain locker.
7.H.	☐	☐	☐	Deficiencies found during the out of water survey should be corrected to the satisfaction of the attending marine surveyor or vessel owner within a stipulated time frame.
Notes:				

8. Flooding Prevention

	YES	NO	N/A	Action
8.A.	☐	☐	☐	Each vessel should maintain a damage control kit onboard, as appropriate, for the vessel, to include, but not limited to the following: 1. Soft plugs sized as per the vessel's seacocks; 2. Soft wood lumber and wedges; 3. Rubber wrap and/or grease tape; 4. Manila twine; 5. Sheet rubber or neoprene gasket material; 6. Hand tools (hatchet, hammer, screwdriver, C-clamps, handsaw, hacksaw, disposable flashlights, head-lamps); 7. Hose clamps and wire ties; 8. Water impervious patching material and/or underwater epoxy; 9. Oakum and rags; and 10. Duct tape
8.B.	☐	☐	☐	In addition to any required dewatering pump, each vessel should also maintain onboard a portable dewatering pump which meets the requirements of 46 CFR 28.255, if space allow and fuel for the pump can be safely stored on the vessel. The pump should have an independent power source.
8.C.	☐	☐	☐	Each vessel should have written instructions and policy regarding watertight/weathertight closures to include: ☐ At-sea policy for maintaining and verifying watertight/weathertight integrity and the status of such closures; and ☐ Preventive maintenance schedule for each watertight/weathertight closure.
Notes:				

	YES	NO	N/A	Action
8.D.	☐	☐	☐	Prior to operating the vessel on a voyage, the individual in charge of each vessel should complete a pre-departure check to include, but not limited to: ☐ Evaluation of weather and bar conditions; ☐ Gear, catch, and hatches are secured; ☐ Vessel is not overloaded; ☐ Scuppers and freeing ports are clear; ☐ Visible portions of shafts and rudder posts show no or little leakage; and ☐ Vessel tanks and holds are filled in such a manner to limit free surface effect. Any discrepancy found during the check should be corrected prior to the vessel getting underway. The individual in charge must ensure the seaworthiness of the vessel. Results of the pre-departure check should be recorded.
Notes:				

9. Periodic Testing of Equipment and Systems

	YES	NO	N/A	Action
9.A.	☐	☐	☐	The following equipment and systems, where required or installed, should be tested prior to operation of the vessel and at least once each week thereafter: ☐ Emergency generator(s) and lighting; ☐ High water alarms; ☐ Bilge pump(s); ☐ Dewatering system(s); ☐ Deck water/fire pump(s); and ☐ Smoke/heat/gas detectors
9.B.	☐	☐	☐	A record of equipment and systems testing is to be kept on board the vessel, and retained for 3 years. *See Section 1.B.*

10. Refrigerant Safety

	YES	NO	N/A	Action
10.A.	☐	☐	☐	Refrigerant detectors should be installed in spaces containing the main receiver and compressors (e.g. freon, ammonia or others as needed) or a portable detector can be substituted.
10.B.	☐	☐	☐	Pressure relief valves should be vented to the outside. The refrigeration system should be exhausted to the outside, but not such that it would breach watertight or weathertight integrity.
10.C.	☐	☐	☐	The refrigeration system should be isolated from normally manned spaces where practicable. The space housing the refrigeration system should be adequately ventilated.
Notes:				

11. Stability Standards

	YES	NO	N/A	Action
11.A.	☐	☐	☐	Vessel **WITH** stability documentation: ☐ Onboard the vessel ☐ Reviewed by naval architect, marine engineer, or other qualified individual at least every 5 years or after the vessel has been modified or altered in any way that changes its stability or handling characteristics. Date of review: _____ By: _____
Notes:				

11.B.	☐	☐	☐	Vessel **WITHOUT** stability documentation, the owner/operator should be able to show at least one of the following: The vessel's operation and history of service does not cause the stability of the vessel to be questioned by the Coast Guard or a third party who performs a condition survey of the vessel. If this history of service is not available then: 1. The vessel performs satisfactorily on an operational test that demonstrates it has acceptable stability and handling characteristics; or 2. The vessel has a satisfactory stability assessment considering its form, arrangement, construction, number of decks, route, and any operating restrictions of the vessel.
11.C.	☐	☐	☐	The operator of the vessel should be provided basic training on stability, and on the current loading conditions and stability instructions for the vessel.
Notes:				

12. Combating Fatigue

	YES	NO	N/A	Action
12.A.	☐	☐	☐	The individual in charge of the vessel should ensure watch-standers are afforded rest periods and are adequately rested before standing their watch, particularly if the vessel is operating more than 12 hours per day.
12.B.	☐	☐	☐	Watch Alarm ☐ Installed in the pilot house ☐ Set < 15 mins ☐ Used at all times while underway ☐ Audible alarm able to alert others who may be responsible for the operation of the vessel.

13. Man Overboard Prevention and Response

	YES	NO	N/A	Action
13.A.	☐	☐	☐	**Prevention – New Construction-Vessels > 58'** ☐ Minimum bulwark and perimeter railing heights be one meter (39.4 inches) ☐ Railing courses centered at 39", 24" and 9" above the deck.
13.B.	☐	☐	☐	**PFD Policy** ☐ Does the vessel have a PFD Policy? ☐ Do crew lean over gunnel to deploy or set gear? ☐ Do crew work on deck, particularly a wet deck? ☐ Do crew walk out on deck alone? ☐ Do crew work aloft (e.g., climbing / working on the stack)? ☐ If any above are checked, encourage Master to adopt a simplified PFD policy
13.C.	☐	☐	☐	**PFD Evaluation** ☐ Assist the Master in Evaluating On-Board PFDs. ☐ Do on-board PFDs fit the crew members? ☐ Are they serviceable? ☐ Is it comfortable? ☐ Will it get entangled in gear? ☐ Will you wear it (aka is it cool)? ☐ Share National Fishermen PFD Gear Summary
13.D.	☐	☐	☐	**PFD Equipment Checklist** ☐ Is strobe operational, USCG approved? ☐ Batteries current? ☐ Whistle? ☐ GPS Enabled P-PIRB? ☐ Explain benefits and use of additional PFD equipment.

	YES	NO	N/A	Action
13.E.	☐	☐	☐	**Man Overboard Drills*** ☐ Review last man overboard drill held ☐ Does WQSB or Emergency Assignments accurately reflect previously described MOB drill ☐ Review techniques and equipment used to recover the person from the water ☐ What recovery equipment is used? _____ ☐ Is MOB recovery device sufficient for various sized crew members? ☐ Discuss what follow-up procedures (1st Aid) are used on the MOB victim. ☐ Verify if the drill MOB was logged
13.F	☐	☐	☐	**Special Considerations for vessels with a single operator** If you fall overboard it is imperative that you stay afloat, communicate your distress, stop your vessel, and be able to get back on board. ☐ **Does Master Wear PFD 100% of time?** ☐ **Is vessel equipped with self-recovery device or re-boarding device.** ☐ **Does vessel have an engine kill switch or other means to stop the vessel's propulsion?**
Notes:				

- **** The Examiner should use good judgment when determining whether the operator and crew can safely and quickly recover a person overboard. A commercial fishing vessel decal is only issued when vessel operators demonstrate what is required for emergency drills.***