



Marine Safety Information Bulletin

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Means of Escape Onboard Offshore Supply Vessels

Multiple marine casualties in recent years highlight the need for a renewed emphasis on safety orientations and abandon ship drills conducted onboard offshore supply vessels (OSVs), including liftboats. As such, the purpose of this bulletin is to provide guidance to vessel operators and masters for training and orienting onboard personnel on evacuation procedures and means of escape.

Investigations of these marine casualties revealed that some of the survivors (both crew members and offshore workers) believed that their stateroom windows were designed to serve as emergency escapes. After the vessel capsized, the individuals became disoriented and spent significant amounts of time in the dark trying to break open windows, narrowly escaping before their staterooms filled with water. This incident demonstrates how critical it is for all personnel onboard to be intimately familiar with the means of escape required by 46 CFR 127.240.

Therefore, vessel masters should ensure that the safety orientations for offshore workers required by 46 CFR 131.320 and the abandon ship drills required by 46 CFR 131.530 include a robust discussion on means of escape during emergencies.

Furthermore, OSV operators should consider:

- In addition to required emergency lighting, clearly marking all emergency escape routes and exits using photoluminescent (glow-in-the dark) markings not more than 300mm above the deck.
- Ensuring that each vessel complies with requirements for means of escape in 46 CFR 127.240 and, if necessary, immediately contacting the cognizant Officer in Charge, Marine Inspection (OCMI) to discuss alternative means of escape.
- Revising the abandon ship training material required by 46 CFR 131.530 to include vessel specific information regarding means of escape and egress during emergencies.

Questions regarding these requirements should be sent to the Coast Guard Office of Operating and Environmental Standards, by email at CG-OES@uscg.mil.

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