

# BULLETIN

## Collision Regulation Posters: COLREGs rules 6, 19 and 35

Continuing the series of posters to remind bridge watchkeeping officers of the requirements of COLREGs, a further poster is being sent out with the April 2014 edition of *Risk Watch*.



This poster illustrates an all too frequent cause of collision where ships proceed too fast in the prevailing conditions. Rule 6 lists various factors that should be taken into consideration when fixing a safe speed:

- visibility
- traffic density
- the type of ship and manoeuvrability
- the presence of background light from shore or back scatter of own lights
- the sea state and the proximity of navigational hazards
- the draught in relation to the available depth of water.

The rule also emphasises the appropriate use of radar.

The scene played out in the poster depicts busy traffic with visibility reducing. This is a sizeable ship proceeding at 19 knots in close proximity to other ships in deteriorating weather conditions. There is an immediate need to reduce the speed and take into consideration all the factors outlined in rule 6. There is also a requirement to prepare the engines for possible manoeuvring and to start sounding the fog signal (rules 19 and 35).

The rules provide clear and concise instructions to make early and substantial action to avoid collision.

What would you do?

## INTERNATIONAL REGULATIONS FOR PREVENTING COLLISIONS AT SEA, 1972

(as amended by Resolutions A464(XII), A626(15), A678(16), A736(18) and A.910(22))

### PART B – STEERING AND SAILING RULES

#### Section I – Conduct of vessels in any condition of visibility

##### Rule 6 Safe speed

Every vessel shall at all times proceed at a safe speed so that she can take proper and effective action to avoid collision and be stopped within a distance appropriate to the prevailing circumstances and conditions.

In determining a safe speed the following factors shall be among those taken into account:

- (a) By all vessels:
  - (i) the state of visibility;
  - (ii) the traffic density including concentrations of fishing vessels or any other vessels;
  - (iii) the manoeuvrability of the vessel with special reference to stopping distance and turning ability in the prevailing conditions;
  - (iv) at night the presence of background light such as from shore lights or from back scatter of her own lights;
  - (v) the state of wind, sea and current, and the proximity of navigational hazards;
  - (vi) the draught in relation to the available depth of water.
- (b) Additionally, by vessels with operational radar:
  - (i) the characteristics, efficiency and limitations of the radar equipment;
  - (ii) any constraints imposed by the radar range scale in use;
  - (iii) the effect on radar detection of the sea state, weather and other sources of interference;
  - (iv) the possibility that small vessels, ice and other floating objects may not be detected by radar at an adequate range;
  - (v) the number, location and movement of vessels detected by radar;
  - (vi) the more exact assessment of the visibility that may be possible when radar is used to determine the range of vessels or other objects in the vicinity.

#### Section III – Conduct of vessels in restricted visibility

##### Rule 19 Conduct of vessels in restricted visibility

(a) This rule applies to vessels not in sight of one another when navigating in or near an area of restricted visibility.

(b) Every vessel shall proceed at a safe speed adapted to the prevailing circumstances and conditions of restricted visibility. A power-driven vessel shall have her engines ready for immediate manoeuvre.

(c) Every vessel shall have due regard to the prevailing circumstances and conditions of restricted visibility when complying with the rules of Section I of this Part.

(d) A vessel which detects by radar alone the presence of another vessel shall determine if a closequarters situation is developing and/or risk of collision exists. If so, she shall take avoiding action in ample time, provided that when such action consists of an alteration of course, so far as possible the following shall be avoided:

- (i) an alteration of course to port for a vessel forward of the beam, other than for a vessel being overtaken;
- (ii) an alteration of course towards a vessel abeam or abaft the beam.

(e) Except where it has been determined that a risk of collision does not exist, every vessel which hears apparently forward of her beam the fog signal of another vessel, or which cannot avoid a close-quarters situation with another vessel forward of her beam, shall reduce her speed to the minimum at which she can be kept on her course. She shall if necessary take all her way off and in any event navigate with extreme caution until danger of collision is over.

**PART D – SOUND AND LIGHT SIGNALS****Rule 35 Sound signals in restricted visibility**

In or near an area of restricted visibility, whether by day or night, the signals prescribed in this rule shall be used as follows:

- (a) A power-driven vessel making way through the water shall sound at intervals of not more than 2 minutes one prolonged blast.
- (b) A power-driven vessel underway but stopped and making no way through the water shall sound at intervals of not more than 2 minutes two prolonged blasts in succession with an interval of about 2 seconds between them.
- (c) A vessel not under command, a vessel restricted in her ability to manoeuvre, a vessel constrained by her draught, a sailing vessel, a vessel engaged in fishing and a vessel engaged in towing or pushing another vessel shall, instead of the signals prescribed in paragraphs (a) or (b) of this rule, sound at intervals of not more than 2 minutes three blasts in succession, namely one prolonged followed by two short blasts.
- (d) A vessel engaged in fishing, when at anchor, and a vessel restricted in her ability to manoeuvre when carrying out her work at anchor, shall instead of the signals prescribed in paragraph (g) of this rule sound the signal prescribed in paragraph (c) of this rule.
- (e) A vessel towed or if more than one vessel is towed the last vessel of the tow, if manned, shall at intervals of not more than 2 minutes sound four blasts in succession, namely one prolonged followed by three short blasts. When practicable, this signal shall be made immediately after the signal made by the towing vessel.
- (f) When a pushing vessel and a vessel being pushed ahead are rigidly connected in a composite unit they shall be regarded as a power-driven vessel and shall give the signals prescribed in paragraphs (a) or (b) of this rule.
- (g) A vessel at anchor shall at intervals of not more than one minute ring the bell rapidly for about 5 seconds. In a vessel of 100 metres or more in length the bell shall be sounded in the forepart of the vessel and immediately after the ringing of the bell the gong shall be sounded rapidly for about 5 seconds in the after part of the vessel. A vessel at anchor may in addition sound three blasts in succession, namely one short, one prolonged and one short blast, to give warning of her position and of the possibility of collision to an approaching vessel.
- (h) A vessel aground shall give the bell signal and if required the gong signal prescribed in paragraph (g) of this rule and shall, in addition, give three separate and distinct strokes on the bell immediately before and after the rapid ringing of the bell. A vessel aground may in addition sound an appropriate whistle signal.
- (i) A vessel of 12 metres or more but less than 20 metres in length shall not be obliged to give the bell signals prescribed in paragraphs (g) and (h) of this rule. However, if she does not, she shall make some other efficient sound signal at intervals of not more than 2 minutes.
- (j) A vessel of less than 12 metres in length shall not be obliged to give the above-mentioned signals but, if she does not, shall make some other efficient sound signal at intervals of not more than 2 minutes.
- (k) A pilot vessel when engaged on pilotage duty may in addition to the signals prescribed in paragraphs (a),(b) or (g) of this rule sound an identity signal consisting of four short blasts.



Tindall Riley (Britannia) Limited  
Regis House  
45 King William Street  
London EC4R 9AN

Tel +44 (0)20 7407 3588  
Fax +44 (0)20 7403 3942  
[www.britanniapandi.com](http://www.britanniapandi.com)

