

§ 80.306

watch must be maintained by a crewmember who may perform other duties, relating to the operation or navigation of the vessel, provided such other duties do not interfere with the watch. Use of properly adjusted squelch of brief interruptions due to other nearby VHF transmissions are not considered to adversely affect the watch. This watch need not be maintained by vessels subject to the Bridge-to-Bridge Act and participating in a Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) system when a watch is maintained on both the bridge-to-bridge frequency and a VTS frequency.

(c) Each vessel of the United States transporting more than six passengers for hire, which is equipped with a radiotelephone station for compliance with part III of title III of the Communications Act must, while being navigated in the open sea or any tidewater within the jurisdiction of the United States adjacent or contiguous to the open sea, keep a continuous watch on 2182 kHz while the vessel is beyond VHF communication range of the nearest VHF coast station, whenever the radiotelephone station is not being used for authorized traffic. A VHF watch must be kept on 156.800 MHz whenever such station is not being used for authorized traffic. The VHF watch must be maintained at the vessel's steering station actually in use by the qualified operator as defined by § 80.157 or by a crewmember who may perform other duties relating to the operation or navigation of the vessel, provided such other duties do not interfere with the watch. The use of a properly adjusted squelch is not considered to adversely affect the watch. The VHF watch need not be maintained by vessels subject to the Bridge-to-Bridge Act and participating in a Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) system when an efficient listening watch is maintained on both the bridge-to-bridge frequency and a VTS frequency.

§ 80.306 Provisions governing the radiotelegraph watch.

(a) The radio officer must use the main or reserve receiver, and either headphones or a loudspeaker to keep the watch on 500 kHz.

(b) During the watch, the radio officer may temporarily interrupt the re-

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quired watch on 500 kHz while transmitting or receiving signals or messages to or from a station but only if it is not feasible to simultaneously handle such traffic and listen on 500 kHz by split headphones or a loudspeaker. The watch on 500 kHz must, however, without exception be maintained during the silence periods.

(c) During this watch, on vessels subject to the Communications Act and the Safety Convention on international voyages, the radio officer may discontinue listening when handling traffic on other frequencies or performing other essential radio duties, but only if it is impracticable to listen by split headphones or loudspeaker. The watch must always be maintained by a radio officer using headphones or loudspeaker during the silence periods. The term "essential radio duties" in this rule includes urgent repairs of radio-communication equipment used for safety or radio navigational equipment by order of the master.

(d) When authorized by the master, the radio officer may perform maintenance repair of communications, navigation or other electronic equipment outside of the radiotelegraph room, provided that the listening watch on 500 kHz can be maintained by headphones, loudspeakers, portable receivers, or other suitable means. The watch on 500 kHz must be maintained in the radiotelegraph room during the silence period.

§ 80.307 Compulsory use of radiotelegraph auto alarm.

The radiotelegraph auto alarm required on a cargo ship subject to the radiotelegraph provisions of part II of title III of the Communications Act or the Safety Convention must be in operation, connected to the main antenna and adjusted for optimum efficiency at all times while the ship is being navigated in the open sea when a radio officer is not listening on the frequency 500 kHz, except under the circumstances as set forth in § 80.306(b).

§ 80.308 Watch required by the Great Lakes Radio Agreement.

(a) Each ship of the United States that is equipped with a radiotelephone station for compliance with the Great

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Lakes Radio Agreement must when underway keep a watch on:

(1) 156.800 MHz on board a vessel 20 meters (65 feet) and over in length, a vessel engaged in towing (See § 80.951(b)), or a vessel carrying more than 6 passengers for hire. This watch must be maintained whenever the station is not being used for authorized traffic. However, a watch on 156.800 MHz need not be maintained by a vessel maintaining a watch on the bridge-to-bridge frequency 156.650 MHz and participating in a Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) system and maintaining a watch on the specified VTS frequency.

(2) 156.650 MHz on board a vessel 38 meters (124 feet) and over in length, a vessel engaged in towing (See § 80.951(b)), or a vessel carrying more than six passengers for hire. This watch must be maintained continuously and effectively. Sequential monitoring is not sufficient. Portable VHF equipment may be used to meet this requirement. Vessels are exempted from this requirement while transiting the St. Lawrence Seaway and complying with the Joint Regulations of the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority and St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation between the lower exit of St. Lambert Lock at Montreal and Cross-over Island, New York and in the Welland Canal and approaches between Calling in Point No. 15 and No. 16.

(b) The watch must be maintained by the master, or person designated by the master, who may perform other duties provided they do not interfere with the effectiveness of the watch.

[53 FR 17052, May 13, 1988]

§ 80.309 Watch required by the Bridge-to-Bridge Act.

In addition to the watch requirement contained in § 80.148, all vessels subject to the Bridge-to-Bridge Act must keep a watch on the designated navigational frequency. The watch must be maintained by the master or person in charge of the vessel or the person designated by the master or person in charge to pilot or direct the movement of the vessel. The person standing watch may perform other duties pro-

vided such other duties do not interfere with the watch.

[51 FR 31213, Sept. 2, 1986, as amended at 57 FR 61012, Dec. 23, 1992]

§ 80.310 Watch required by voluntary vessels.

Voluntary vessels not equipped with DSC must maintain a watch on 156.800 MHz (channel 16) whenever the radio is operating and is not being used to communicate. Noncommercial vessels, such as recreational boats, may alternatively maintain a watch on 156.450 MHz (channel 9) for call and reply purposes.

[57 FR 19552, May 7, 1992]

DISTRESS, ALARM, URGENCY AND SAFETY PROCEDURES

§ 80.311 Authority for distress transmission.

A mobile station in distress may use any means at its disposal to attract attention, make known its position, and obtain help. A distress call and message, however, must be transmitted only on the authority of the master or person responsible for the mobile station. No person shall knowingly transmit, or cause to be transmitted, any false or fraudulent signal of distress or related communication.

§ 80.312 Priority of distress transmissions.

The distress call has absolute priority over all other transmissions. All stations which hear it must immediately cease any transmission capable of interfering with the distress traffic and must continue to listen on the frequency used for the emission of the distress call. This call must not be addressed to a particular station. Acknowledgement of receipt must not be given before the distress message which follows it is sent.

§ 80.313 Frequencies for use in distress.

The frequencies specified in the bands below are for use by mobile stations in distress. The conventional emission is shown. When a ship station cannot transmit on the designated frequency or the conventional emission, it may use any available frequency or