

MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS**NOTIFICATION**

New Delhi, the 7th June, 2022

G.S.R. 425(E).—Whereas draft of the Inland Vessels (Life Saving Appliances) Rules, 2022 were published, as required under sub-section (1) of section 106 of the Inland Vessels Act, 2021 (24 of 2021), vide notification of the Government of India in the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways vide number G.S.R. 140(E) dated the 22nd February, 2022 in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part-II, Section 3, Sub-section (i) dated the 22nd February, 2022 inviting objections and suggestions from all persons likely to be affected thereby before the expiry of the period of thirty days from the date on which copies of the Gazette containing the said notification were made available to public;

And, whereas, copies of the said Gazette notification were made available to the public on 22nd February, 2022;

And, whereas the objections and suggestions received from the public in respect of the said draft rules have been considered by the Central Government.

Now, therefore in exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (1) of section 51 and clause (e) of sub-section (1) of section 98 read with clause (zl) and (zza) of sub-section (2) of section 106 of the Inland Vessels Act, 2021, the Central Government hereby makes the following rules, namely:-

1. Short title and commencement.- (1) These rules may be called the Inland Vessels (Life Saving Appliances) Rules, 2022.

(2) Save as otherwise provided, these rules shall come into force on the date of their publication in the Official Gazette.

2. Definitions.- (1) In these rules, unless the context otherwise requires,--

- (a) “Act” means the Inland Vessels Act, 2021(24 of 2021);
- (b) “existing vessel” or “existing inland vessel” means any inland vessel which is not any new inland vessel that falls within the ambit of the definition of “inland vessel” as defined in clause (q) of section 3 of the Act;
- (c) “major conversion or modification” means any of the following-
 - (i) change in gross tonnage of the vessel by more than ten per cent.;
 - (ii) change of vessel type;
 - (iii) change of propulsion system or main engines or type of fuel.
- (d) “new inland vessel” means any inland vessel whose keel is laid or which is at a similar stage of construction on or after the date of coming into force of these rules.

(2) Words and expressions used and not defined in these rules but defined in the Act, shall have the meanings respectively assigned to them in the Act.

3. Compliance by existing inland vessels.- (1) All existing inland vessels shall comply with the requirements existing prior to coming into force of these rules:

Provided that the existing inland vessels that undergo major conversion or modification shall comply with the requirements specified under these rules, as may be considered necessary by the Designated Authority:

Provided further that in the case of change of propulsion system or main engines, the new rules shall apply to that equipment and systems only:

Provided also that existing vessels shall comply with the requirements of provision of life jackets, life buoys and life-raft or buoyant apparatus specified in rule 7 and the safety equipment plan specified in Rule 16 within one year from the date of coming into force of these rules.

(2) The owner and master of any new inland vessel, shall ensure that the vessel is constructed, maintained and operated in accordance with the requirements of these rules and that the vessel is suitable for its intended service.

(3) No new inland vessel shall be issued with the certificate of survey under the Act and the Inland Vessels (Survey and Certification) Rules, 2022, unless such vessel complies with the design and carriage requirements for life saving appliances that the inland vessel shall carry, or those standards or requirements that are operational or procedural in nature.

(4) For the purpose of these rules, the Surveyor appointed under the Act shall satisfy himself that there is evidence of procedures in place to demonstrate that the inland vessel shall be operated in accordance with the requirements under these rules.

4. Equipment Standards and Guidance.- Any particular piece of life saving appliances, equipment or machinery that the inland vessels shall be provided with or carried onboard shall be in accordance with a national or international standard such as the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) or the International Organization for Standardisation (ISO).

5. Classification of vessels.- For the purposes of these rules, the inland vessels shall be classified as-

Class I – Passenger vessels;

Class II – Cargo vessels and vessels other than those falling under Class I and Class III; and

Class III - Non-self propelled vessels falling within the ambit of the definition under sub-clause (ii) of clause (y) of section 3 of the Act.

6. Life Saving Appliances.- (1) An inland vessel of Class I shall carry -

- (a) sufficient number of life-rafts or buoyant apparatus to accommodate at least 100% number of passengers and crew on board and the number of life rafts or buoyant apparatus may be as decided by the Designated Authority depending on area of operation and rescue services available and in vessels of less than 24 metres in length, buoyant apparatus may be replaced with equivalent number of life buoys;
- (b) one life jacket each for 100% of passengers and crew on board;
- (c) life jacket for infant, for 2.5% of total number of passengers certified to carry, where infant means person below 15 kilograms;
- (d) life jacket for child, for 10% of total number of passengers certified to carry and for the purpose of this section, child means person other than infant and below 30 kilograms;
- (e) at least four lifebuoys for vessels up to 24 meters length, six life buoys for vessel 24-45 meters length and 8 life buoys for vessels greater than 45 meters length and at least two of the life buoys shall be with self-igniting light and buoyant line of 30 metres in length;
- (f) all class I vessels with passenger capacity more than 100 passengers shall be provided with a line throwing apparatus which includes not less than 3 projectiles with line each capable of carrying the line to a nominal range of 230 meters in calm weather;
- (g) every vessel of Class I passenger capacity of 200 and above passengers and having length more than 45 metres shall have at least one rescue or workboat with minimum passenger capacity of six persons, which shall be provided with necessary equipment for launching on either side of the vessel and the rescue or workboats are to be maintained in working condition by regular servicing and demonstrated during annual surveys;
- (h) all crew should possess sufficient training in rescue and first aid; and
- (i) all boats shall have search lights and hand torches.

(2) An inland vessel of class II shall carry –

- (a) at least one life raft or buoyant apparatus to accommodate all crew for vessel over 10 meters and in vessels of less than 24 metres in length, buoyant apparatus may be replaced with equivalent number of life buoys;
- (b) one life jacket for each person on board; and
- (c) at least two life buoys for vessels up to 24 meters length and four life buoys for above 24 meters of which one shall be equipped with retro-reflective tapes and buoyant line of 30 metres in length.

(3) A manned inland vessel of class III shall carry –

- (a) one life jacket for each person on board; and
- (b) at least two life buoys, one of which shall be equipped with self- switching light and buoyant line of 30 metres in length.

7. Technical requirements.- (1) Every lifesaving appliances provided as per provisions of these rules shall meet the technical requirements contained in national or international standards and such equipment shall be type approved by the Designated Authority.

(2) All life-saving appliances shall be properly stowed as per the approved plan and maintained or serviced as per the requirements of these rules.

(3) Life buoys, life rafts and buoyant apparatus shall be placed on board in such a way, to be capable of being float - free on submerging.

8. Operational readiness, maintenance and inspection.- (1) Before any inland vessel leaves port and at all times during the voyage, all life-saving appliances on board shall be in working order and ready for immediate use.

(2) Instructions for on-board maintenance of life-saving appliances shall be easily understood and illustrated where possible.

(3) The general emergency alarm system shall be tested weekly.

(4) Inflatable life-rafts shall be serviced at intervals of not more than 12 months at an approved servicing station:

Provided that, in cases where the service of a vessel and the location of approved service station make it impossible to comply with this requirement, the Designated Authority may allow this period to be extended but in no case shall the extension of time period provided under this sub-rule shall be more than 6 months.

(5) A copy of the report of the inspection shall be retained on board.

9. Servicing of life saving appliances.- (1) Liferrafts shall be serviced annually in accordance with the requirements of the Designated Authority.

(2) Inflatable lifejackets shall be serviced at least every 2 years, and where any inflatable lifejackets are used on a regular basis, they shall be serviced annually.

(3) Rescue or workboats are to be maintained in working condition by annual servicing and demonstrated during annual surveys.

10. Public address or general alarm system for communications.- Class II and Class III (manned) vessels of more than 30 metres in length and all Class I vessels shall be provided with a general emergency alarm system or a public address system, which can be used for broadcasting a general emergency alarm and with respect to class I vessels, the public address system shall also meet the requirements of sub-rule (1) of rule 14.

11. Retro-reflective material.- Life-saving appliances shall be fitted with retro-reflective material and the dimensions and location of the material shall be in accordance with national or international standards.

12. Lock Transits.- Vessels transiting locks shall ensure a means of raising alarm in the case of an emergency and shall carry equipment such as-

(1) safety harness and safety rope;

(2) ladders and torches, as appropriate; and

(3) any other equipment or components as may be specified by the Competent Authority from time to time.

13. Emergency information and public address systems on Class I vessels.- (1) Vessels are to be provided with a public address system operable from at least one point that can be heard by all persons onboard and all vessels carrying more than 100 passengers or more than 30 metres in length shall have a public address system operable from at least two well separated points.

(2) In vessels carrying not more than 50 passengers in which the passengers have access to only one passenger compartment or space, a portable loud hailer may be carried in lieu of the a public address system as required under sub-rule (1).

(3) Entertainment systems shall be turned off automatically when the public address system is used and option for manual shut off shall be available on vessels with loud hailers.

(4) The system shall be used to inform the passengers of the action they shall take in the event of an emergency which may lead to the vessel being abandoned and such information, shall be given either prior to or immediately on leaving the berth. The items specified in sub rule (7) shall be part of the information provided.

Explanation.- In the case of vessels which operate regular ferry service of short duration where compliance would result in very frequent broadcasting of the safety message, other arrangements shall be considered by the Designated authority and such arrangements may include drawing attention to the relevant safety notices and the like.

(5) A public address system shall be powered from the main source of electrical power and from an alternative source of electrical power situated in a location remote from the main source and the battery back-up or spare batteries shall be carried for loudhailers.

- (6) Passenger emergency instructions notice shall be displayed in each passenger compartment and the number to be displayed shall depend on the layout of the compartments and the service in which the vessel is engaged.
- (7) The requirement of notice as stipulated in sub-rule (6), shall also be provided in waiting rooms and terminals, where practicable and the information provided in the notice shall include-
- (a) the method to be used to inform passengers that an emergency has occurred;
 - (b) the action that is required to be taken;
 - (c) how to use the life-saving equipment;
 - (d) how to don a lifejacket; and
 - (e) where lifejackets are carried.

14. Search and rescue (SAR) requirements for Class I vessels.- (1) All passenger vessels carrying more than 50 passengers shall carry an agreed and up to date plan for co-operation with relevant emergency services for the vessel's area of operation.

- (2) For the purpose of this rule, brief details of the passenger vessel, the company and the search and rescue services shall be exchanged and maintained ready for use and shall include direct contact details.
- (3) Exercises shall be undertaken periodically to test the plan's effectiveness.
- (4) Records of such exercises and names of participants shall be maintained.

15. Safety equipment plan.- All vessels of 24 metres length and over are to have a safety equipment plan displayed on board showing the location of various life saving appliances and all the fire control and fire fighting appliances fitted or carried on board to be used in an emergency.

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