



MARITIME AND PORT AUTHORITY OF SINGAPORE
SHIPPING ADVISORY
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For the attention of: Ship owners, ISM managers, operators, masters and crew of Singapore-registered ships.

Enhanced Navigational Safety for Singapore-Registered Ships Operating in the Yangtze River and China Coastal Waters

PURPOSE

This advisory draws the attention of owners, ISM managers, operators, masters and crew of Singapore-registered ships (SRS) to enhanced navigational safety measures for vessels operating in the Yangtze River and China coastal waters, including special regulatory measures announced by the Chinese maritime authorities and heightened collision risks in China coastal waters.

BACKGROUND

2 The Jiangsu Maritime Safety Administration has announced special regulatory measures for the Jiangsu section of the Yangtze River during the 2026 high-temperature and flood season, generally from **June** to **August** or when the Datong flow exceeds 45,000 m³/s. SRS operators and masters calling at ports along the Yangtze River should familiarise themselves with and comply with all applicable requirements imposed by the local maritime authorities.

YANGTZE RIVER — NAVIGATIONAL SAFETY MEASURES

3 Before entering the Yangtze River, ships should ensure that their main engines, steering gear, electrical power systems and other critical machinery are maintained in good working condition. Appropriate emergency drills covering main engine failure, steering gear failure and blackout should be conducted, and ships should maintain sufficient propulsion reserve and manoeuvring capability for the prevailing river conditions.

4 When navigating through restricted bridge areas and other critical sections of the Yangtze River, masters should ensure an appropriate level of bridge and engine-room readiness. In particular, where required by the local maritime authorities, the master should be in command on the bridge, the chief engineer should maintain an engine-room watch, and the steering gear compartment should be appropriately manned.

5 Masters should comply with local Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) instructions and traffic organisation measures when navigating through bridges, narrow channels, bends and other complex waterways. Ships should also comply with applicable requirements for tug assistance, including any additional measures imposed during periods of high water levels or flood warnings.

6 Ships at anchor should maintain an effective anchor watch and frequently monitor their position. During flood peaks, strong currents, typhoons or other adverse weather conditions, the main engine should be kept ready for immediate use where appropriate, and additional precautions, including tug assistance, should be considered to prevent dragging of anchor.

CHINA COASTAL WATERS — MERCHANT AND FISHING VESSEL COLLISION RISKS

7 MPA draws the attention of owners, ISM managers, operators, masters and crew to the heightened risk of collision between merchant and fishing vessels in China coastal waters. China MSA has highlighted two periods of particular concern:

a. **"Black September"** – September has been identified as a peak period for merchant-fishing vessel collision risk, particularly following the end of the seasonal fishing moratorium when large numbers of fishing vessels return to sea; and

b. **"Black Five Hours"** (2300–0400 hours) – This period has been identified as a high-risk window, with more than 45% of reported merchant-fishing vessel collision accidents in the cited data occurring during these hours. Fatigue, reduced vigilance, poor nighttime visibility and inadequate lookout may contribute to the increased risk.

8 When navigating in or near fishing grounds and areas of dense fishing traffic, masters are strongly advised to:

a. Conduct appropriate voyage planning and, where practicable, avoid areas of concentrated fishing activity;

b. Maintain a proper lookout by sight, hearing and all available means, and consider reinforcing the bridge watch and posting additional lookouts, particularly during the "Black Five Hours";

c. Make effective use of radar and ARPA, including the appropriate use of different radar ranges to detect small vessels and weak targets, while

avoiding over-reliance on AIS or other electronic navigation equipment;

- d. Maintain a continuous listening watch on VHF Channel 16 and other channels designated by the local maritime authorities;
- e. Maintain the main engine in an appropriate state of readiness when navigating in congested or high-risk waters; and
- f. Assess the risk of collision at an early stage and take early, positive and readily apparent action in accordance with the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREGs).

ACTION REQUIRED

9 Shipowners, ISM managers, operators, masters and crew should ensure that the above risks are adequately addressed in voyage planning, navigational risk assessments and pre-departure or pre-arrival safety briefings. Masters and bridge teams should be familiar with applicable local navigational requirements, high-risk waters and expected fishing vessel activity along the intended route.

10 ISM managers and masters are advised to closely monitor navigational warnings, weather and hydrological conditions, flood alerts and instructions issued by the relevant Chinese maritime authorities, and to take all necessary measures to ensure the continued safety of navigation.

11 Shipowners, ISM managers and masters are requested to bring the content of this Shipping Advisory to the attention of all masters, navigating officers and relevant crew serving onboard SRS calling Yangtze River and China coastal waters.

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