MARITIME AND PORT AUTHORITY OF SINGAPORE
SHIPPING CIRCULAR TO SHIPOWNERS NO. 16 OF 2010

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12 October 2010

Applicable to: This circular is for the attention of ship owners, managers, masters and training service providers.

IMPORTANCE OF VOYAGE PLANNING AND AVOIDING DANGEROUS SITUATIONS IN ADVERSE WEATHER & SEA CONDITIONS

Investigations into recent marine incidents have shown the importance of voyage planning and competency in ship handling during adverse weather. The need for proper voyage planning applies to all vessels and as part of the voyage appraisal and planning stage, the following, among others, should be taken into consideration:

a. Reference be made to Routeing Charts, relevant Sailing Directions, Mariners Handbook (NP 100), ICS Bridge Procedures Guide and Ocean Passages for the World;
b. Officers and crew shall be appropriately brief on the preparation for adverse weather e.g. need for prolonged engine manoeuvrability, readiness of communication equipment, roster for extra look-outs etc.

2. Regarding competency in ship handling during adverse weather, the following, among others, are considered inherent within this competency:

a. Integrity of the vessel shall be ensured before entering an area of adverse weather i.e. vessel be properly secured with hatches batten down, anchors lashed, all water-tight openings secured etc;
b. Deck watch keepers should not hesitate to use the helm, engines and sound signalling apparatus. However, timely notice of intended variations of engine speed should be given where possible in accordance with the applicable procedures;
c. A proper look-out must be maintained at all times;
d. Sufficient rest should be taken before a watch.

3 Masters are reminded of the importance to make a proper assessment of the prevailing weather and sea conditions in respect of their own vessel, when deciding when and how to heave to[1]. A proper understanding of own vessel's characteristics and behaviour in these conditions would assist to prevent any dangerous situation from developing.

4 In this regard, masters should refer to the IMO Resolution A.893 (21) "*Guidelines for Voyage Planning*" and the IMO MSC.1/Circ.1228 "*Revised guidance to the Master for Avoiding Dangerous Situations in Adverse Weather and Sea Conditions*" (ANNEXES) to assist them accordingly.

5 Further information on the contents of this circular can be obtained from MPA Ship Investigation Department (shipping@mpa.gov.sg).

6 This circular supersedes MC No. 6 of 1990 and MC No. 9 of 1994.

CHEONG KENG SOON
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ANNEX 1: IMO Resolution A.893 (21), adopted 25 Nov 1999 *"Guidelines For Voyage Planning"*

ANNEX 2: IMO MSC.1/Circ 1228, 11 Jan 2007 *"Revised Guidelines to The Master For Avoiding Dangerous Situation in Adverse Weather and Sea Conditions"*

[1] "heave to" means to cause a vessel to discontinue its voyage; to reduce speed, come to a stop, or adjust its course or speed to account for the prevailing weather and sea conditions to minimize damage to own vessel

INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION

IMO

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ASSEMBLY
21st session
Agenda item 9

A 2/Res.893
4 February 2000
Original: ENGLISH

RESOLUTION A.893(21)
adopted on 25 November 1999

GUIDELINES FOR VOYAGE PLANNING

THE ASSEMBLY,

RECALLING Article 15(j) of the Convention on the International Maritime Organization concerning the functions of the Assembly in relation to regulations and guidelines concerning maritime safety and the prevention and control of marine pollution from ships,

RECALLING ALSO section A-VIII/2, Part 2 (Voyage planning) of the Seafarers' Training, Certification and Watchkeeping Code,

RECALLING FURTHER the essential requirements contained in the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers and the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea concerning voyage planning, including those relating to officers and crew, shipborne equipment, and safety management systems,

RECOGNIZING the essential importance for safety of life at sea, safety of navigation and protection of the marine environment of a well planned voyage, and therefore the need to update the 1978 Guidance on voyage planning issued as SN/Circ.92,

NOTING the request of the Assembly in resolution A.790(19) that the Maritime Safety Committee consider the issue of voyage planning in conjunction with its review of the Code for the Safe Carriage of Irradiated Nuclear Fuel, Plutonium and High-Level Radioactive Wastes in Flasks on Board Ships (INF Code), and the Committee's decision that consideration of the issue of voyage planning should not be restricted to vessels carrying materials subject to the INF Code but should apply to all ships engaged on international voyages,

HAVING CONSIDERED the recommendation made by the Sub-Committee on Safety of Navigation at its forty-fifth session:

1. ADOPTS the Guidelines for voyage planning set out in the Annex to the present resolution;

2. INVITES Governments to bring the annexed Guidelines to the attention of masters of vessels flying their countries' flag, shipowners, ship operators, shipping companies, maritime pilots, training institutions and all other parties concerned, for information and action as appropriate;

3. REQUESTS the Maritime Safety Committee to keep the said Guidelines under review and to amend them as appropriate.

ANNEX

DRAFT GUIDELINES FOR VOYAGE PLANNING

1 Objectives

1.1 The development of a plan for voyage or passage, as well as the close and continuous monitoring of the vessel's progress and position during the execution of such a plan, are of essential importance for safety of life at sea, safety and efficiency of navigation and protection of the marine environment.

1.2 The need for voyage and passage planning applies to all vessels. There are several factors that may impede the safe navigation of all vessels and additional factors that may impede the navigation of large vessels or vessels carrying hazardous cargoes. These factors will need to be taken into account in the preparation of the plan and in the subsequent monitoring of the execution of the plan.

1.3 Voyage and passage planning includes appraisal, i.e. gathering all information relevant to the contemplated voyage or passage; detailed planning of the whole voyage or passage from berth to berth, including those areas necessitating the presence of a pilot; execution of the plan; and the monitoring of the progress of the vessel in the implementation of the plan. These components of voyage/passage planning are analysed below.

2 Appraisal

2.1 All information relevant to the contemplated voyage or passage should be considered. The following items should be taken into account in voyage and passage planning:

.1 the condition and state of the vessel, its stability, and its equipment; any operational limitations; its permissible draught at sea in fairways and in ports; its manoeuvring data, including any restrictions;

.2 any special characteristics of the cargo (especially if hazardous), and its distribution, stowage and securing on board the vessel;

.3 the provision of a competent and well-rested crew to undertake the voyage or passage;

.4 requirements for up-to-date certificates and documents concerning the vessel, its equipment, crew, passengers or cargo;

.5 appropriate scale, accurate and up-to-date charts to be used for the intended voyage or passage, as well as any relevant permanent or temporary notices to mariners and existing radio navigational warnings;

.6 accurate and up-to-date sailing directions, lists of lights and lists of radio aids to navigation; and

.7 any relevant up-to-date additional information, including:

.1 mariners' routeing guides and passage planning charts, published by competent authorities;

.2 current and tidal atlases and tide tables;

.3 climatological, hydrographical, and oceanographic data as well as other appropriate meteorological information;

.4 availability of services for weather routeing (such as that contained in Volume D of the World Meteorological Organization's Publication No. 9);

.5 existing ships' routeing and reporting systems, vessel traffic services, and marine environmental protection measures;

.6 volume of traffic likely to be encountered throughout the voyage or passage;

.7 if a pilot is to be used, information relating to pilotage and embarkation and disembarkation including the exchange of information between master and pilot;

.8 available port information, including information pertaining to the availability of shore-based emergency response arrangements and equipment; and

.9 any additional items pertinent to the type of the vessel or its cargo, the particular areas the vessel will traverse, and the type of voyage or passage to be undertaken.

2.2 On the basis of the above information, an overall appraisal of the intended voyage or passage should be made. This appraisal should provide a clear indication of all areas of danger; those areas where it will be possible to navigate safely, including any existing routeing or reporting systems and vessel traffic services; and any areas where marine environmental protection considerations apply.

3 Planning

3.1 On the basis of the fullest possible appraisal, a detailed voyage or passage plan should be prepared which should cover the entire voyage or passage from berth to berth, including those areas where the services of a pilot will be used.

3.2 The detailed voyage or passage plan should include the following factors:

.1 the plotting of the intended route or track of the voyage or passage on appropriate scale charts: the true direction of the planned route or track should be indicated, as well as all areas of danger, existing ships' routeing and reporting systems, vessel traffic services, and any areas where marine environmental protection considerations apply;

.2 the main elements to ensure safety of life at sea, safety and efficiency of navigation, and protection of the marine environment during the intended voyage or passage; such elements should include, but not be limited to:

.1 safe speed, having regard to the proximity of navigational hazards along the intended route or track, the manoeuvring characteristics of the vessel and its draught in relation to the available water depth;

.2 necessary speed alterations en route, e.g., where there may be limitations because of night passage, tidal restrictions, or allowance for the increase of draught due to squat and heel effect when turning;

.3 minimum clearance required under the keel in critical areas with restricted water depth;

.4 positions where a change in machinery status is required;

.5 course alteration points, taking into account the vessel's turning circle at the planned speed and any expected effect of tidal streams and currents;

.6 the method and frequency of position fixing, including primary and secondary options, and the indication of areas where accuracy of position fixing is critical and where maximum reliability must be obtained;

.7 use of ships' routeing and reporting systems and vessel traffic services;

.8 considerations relating to the protection of the marine environment; and

.9 contingency plans for alternative action to place the vessel in deep water or proceed to a port of refuge or safe anchorage in the event of any emergency necessitating abandonment of the plan, taking into account existing shore-based emergency response arrangements and equipment and the nature of the cargo and of the emergency itself.

3.3 The details of the voyage or passage plan should be clearly marked and recorded, as appropriate, on charts and in a voyage plan notebook or computer disk.

3.4 Each voyage or passage plan as well as the details of the plan, should be approved by the ships' master prior to the commencement of the voyage or passage.

4 Execution

4.1 Having finalized the voyage or passage plan, as soon as time of departure and estimated time of arrival can be determined with reasonable accuracy, the voyage or passage should be executed in accordance with the plan or any changes made thereto.

4.2 Factors which should be taken into account when executing the plan, or deciding on any departure therefrom include:

.1 the reliability and condition of the vessel's navigational equipment;

.2 estimated times of arrival at critical points for tide heights and flow;

.3 meteorological conditions, (particularly in areas known to be affected by frequent periods of low visibility) as well as weather routeing information;

.4 daytime versus night-time passing of danger points, and any effect this may have on position fixing accuracy; and

.5 traffic conditions, especially at navigational focal points.

4.3 It is important for the master to consider whether any particular circumstance, such as the forecast of restricted visibility in an area where position fixing by visual means at a critical point is an essential feature of the voyage or passage plan, introduces an unacceptable hazard to the safe conduct of the passage; and thus whether that section of the passage should be attempted under the conditions prevailing or likely to prevail. The master should also consider at which specific points of the voyage or passage there may be a need to utilize additional deck or engine room personnel.

5 Monitoring

5.1 The plan should be available at all times on the bridge to allow officers of the navigational watch immediate access and reference to the details of the plan.

5.2 The progress of the vessel in accordance with the voyage and passage plan should be closely and continuously monitored. Any changes made to the plan should be made consistent with these Guidelines and clearly marked and recorded.

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MSC.1/Circ.1228
11 January 2007

REVISED GUIDANCE TO THE MASTER FOR AVOIDING DANGEROUS SITUATIONS IN ADVERSE WEATHER AND SEA CONDITIONS

1 The Maritime Safety Committee, at its eighty-second session (29 November to 8 December 2006), approved the Revised Guidance to the master for avoiding dangerous situations in adverse weather and sea conditions, set out in the annex, with a view to providing masters with a basis for decision making on ship handling in adverse weather and sea conditions, thus assisting them to avoid dangerous phenomena that they may encounter in such circumstances.

2 Member Governments are invited to bring the annexed Revised Guidance to the attention of interested parties as they deem appropriate.

3 This Revised Guidance supersedes the Guidance to the master for avoiding dangerous situations in following and quartering seas (MSC/Circ.707).

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ANNEX

REVISED GUIDANCE TO THE MASTER FOR AVOIDING DANGEROUS SITUATIONS IN ADVERSE WEATHER AND SEA CONDITIONS

1 GENERAL

1.1 Adverse weather conditions, for the purpose of the following guidelines, include wind induced waves or heavy swell. Some combinations of wave length and wave height under certain operation conditions may lead to dangerous situations for ships complying with the IS Code. However, description of adverse weather conditions below shall not preclude a ship master from taking reasonable action in less severe conditions if it appears necessary.

1.2 When sailing in adverse weather conditions, a ship is likely to encounter various kinds of dangerous phenomena, which may lead to capsizing or severe roll motions causing damage to cargo, equipment and persons on board. The sensitivity of a ship to dangerous phenomena will depend on the actual stability parameters, hull geometry, ship size and ship speed. This implies that the vulnerability to dangerous responses, including capsizing, and its probability of occurrence in a particular sea state may differ for each ship.

1.3 On ships which are equipped with an on-board computer for stability evaluations, and which use specially developed software which takes into account the main particulars, actual stability and dynamic characteristics of the individual ship in the real voyage conditions, such software should be approved by the Administration. Results derived from such calculations should only be regarded as a supporting tool during the decision making process.

1.4 Waves should be observed regularly. In particular, the wave period T_W should be measured by means of a stop watch as the time span between the generation of a foam patch by a breaking wave and its reappearance after passing the wave trough. The wave length λ is determined either by visual observation in comparison with the ship length or by reading the mean distance between successive wave crests on the radar images of waves.

1.5 The wave period and the wave length λ are related as follows:

$$\lambda = 1.56 \cdot T_W^2 \text{ [m] or } T_W = 0.8\sqrt{\lambda} \text{ [s]}$$

1.6 The period of encounter T_E could be either measured as the period of pitching by using stop watch or calculated by the formula:

$$T_E = \frac{3T_W^2}{3T_W + V\cos(\alpha)} \text{ [s]}$$

where V = ship's speed [knots]; and
α = angle between keel direction and wave direction ($\alpha = 0°$ means head sea)

1.7 The diagram in figure 1 may as well be used for the determination of the period of encounter.

1.8 The height of significant waves should also be estimated.

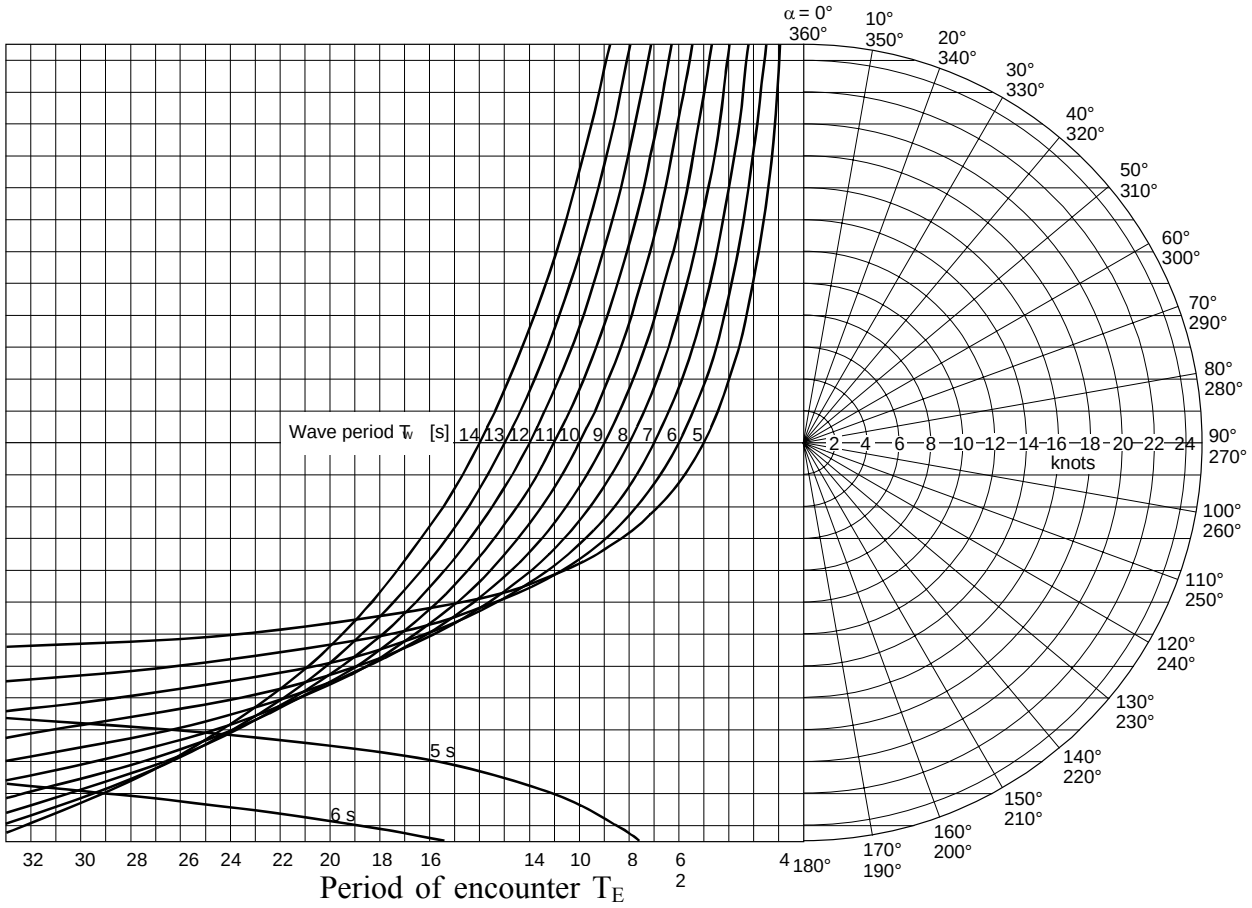

Figure 1: Determination of the period of encounter T_E

2 CAUTIONS

2.1 It should be noted that this guidance to the master has been designed to accommodate for all types of merchant ships. Therefore, being of a general nature, the guidance may be too restrictive for certain ships with more favourable dynamic properties, or too generous for certain other ships. A ship could be unsafe even outside the dangerous zones defined in this guidance if the stability of the ship is insufficient. Masters are requested to use this guidance with fair observation of the particular features of the ship and her behaviour in heavy weather.

2.2 It should further be noted that this guidance is restricted to hazards in adverse weather conditions that may cause capsizing of the vessel or heavy rolling with a risk of damage. Other hazards and risks in adverse weather conditions, like damage through slamming, longitudinal or torsional stresses, special effects of waves in shallow water or current, risk of collision or stranding, are not addressed in this guidance and must be additionally considered when deciding on an appropriate course and speed in adverse weather conditions.

2.3 The master should ascertain that his ship complies with the stability criteria specified in the IS Code or an equivalent thereto. Appropriate measures should be taken to assure the ship's watertight integrity. Securing of cargo and equipment should be re-checked. The ship's natural period of roll T_R should be estimated by observing roll motions in calm sea.

3 DANGEROUS PHENOMENA

3.1 Phenomena occurring in following and quartering seas

A ship sailing in following or stern quartering seas encounters the waves with a longer period than in beam, head or bow waves, and principal dangers caused in such situation are as follows:

3.1.1 Surf-riding and broaching-to

When a ship is situated on the steep forefront of a high wave in following or quartering sea conditions, the ship can be accelerated to ride on the wave. This is known as surf-riding. In this situation the so-called broaching-to phenomenon may occur, which endangers the ship to capsizing as a result of a sudden change of the ship's heading and unexpected large heeling.

3.1.2 Reduction of intact stability when riding a wave crest amidships

When a ship is riding on the wave crest, the intact stability can be decreased substantially according to changes of the submerged hull form. This stability reduction may become critical for wave lengths within the range of 0.6 L up to 2.3 L, where L is the ship's length in metres. Within this range the amount of stability reduction is nearly proportional to the wave height. This situation is particularly dangerous in following and quartering seas, because the duration of riding on the wave crest, which corresponds to the time interval of reduced stability, becomes longer.

3.2 Synchronous rolling motion

Large rolling motions may be excited when the natural rolling period of a ship coincides with the encounter wave period. In case of navigation in following and quartering seas this may happen when the transverse stability of the ship is marginal and therefore the natural roll period becomes longer.

3.3 Parametric roll motions

3.3.1 Parametric roll motions with large and dangerous roll amplitudes in waves are due to the variation of stability between the position on the wave crest and the position in the wave trough. Parametric rolling may occur in two different situations:

.1 The stability varies with an encounter period T_E that is about equal to the roll period T_R of the ship (encounter ratio 1:1). The stability attains a minimum once during each roll period. This situation is characterized by asymmetric rolling, i.e. the amplitude with the wave crest amidships is much greater than the amplitude to the other side. Due to the tendency of retarded up-righting from the large amplitude, the roll period T_R may adapt to the encounter period to a certain extent, so that this kind of parametric rolling may occur with a wide bandwidth of encounter periods. In quartering seas a transition to harmonic resonance may become noticeable.

.2 The stability varies with an encounter period T_E that is approximately equal to half the roll period T_R of the ship (encounter ratio 1:0.5). The stability attains a minimum twice during each roll period. In following or quartering seas, where the encounter period becomes larger than the wave period, this may only occur

with very large roll periods T_R, indicating a marginal intact stability. The result is symmetric rolling with large amplitudes, again with the tendency of adapting the ship response to the period of encounter due to reduction of stability on the wave crest. Parametric rolling with encounter ratio 1:0.5 may also occur in head and bow seas.

3.3.2 Other than in following or quartering seas, where the variation of stability is solely effected by the waves passing along the vessel, the frequently heavy heaving and/or pitching in head or bow seas may contribute to the magnitude of the stability variation, in particular due to the periodical immersion and emersion of the flared stern frames and bow flare of modern ships. This may lead to severe parametric roll motions even with small wave induced stability variations.

3.3.3 The ship's pitching and heaving periods usually equals the encounter period with the waves. How much the pitching motion contributes to the parametric roll motion depends on the timing (coupling) between the pitching and rolling motion.

3.4 Combination of various dangerous phenomena

The dynamic behaviour of a ship in following and quartering seas is very complex. Ship motion is three-dimensional and various detrimental factors or dangerous phenomena like additional heeling moments due to deck-edge submerging, water shipping and trapping on deck or cargo shift due to large roll motions may occur in combination with the above mentioned phenomena, simultaneously or consecutively. This may create extremely dangerous combinations, which may cause ship capsize.

4 OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE

The shipmaster is recommended to take the following procedures of ship handling to avoid the dangerous situations when navigating in severe weather conditions.

4.1 Ship condition

This guidance is applicable to all types of conventional ships navigating in rough seas, provided the stability criteria specified in resolution A.749(18), as amended by resolution MSC.75(69), are satisfied.

4.2 How to avoid dangerous conditions

4.2.1 For surf-riding and broaching-to

Surf-riding and broaching-to may occur when the angle of encounter is in the range $135° < \alpha < 225°$ and the ship speed is higher than $\left(1.8\sqrt{L}\right)\Big/\cos\left(180-\alpha\right)$ (knots). To avoid surf riding, and possible broaching the ship speed, the course or both should be taken outside the dangerous region reported in figure 2.

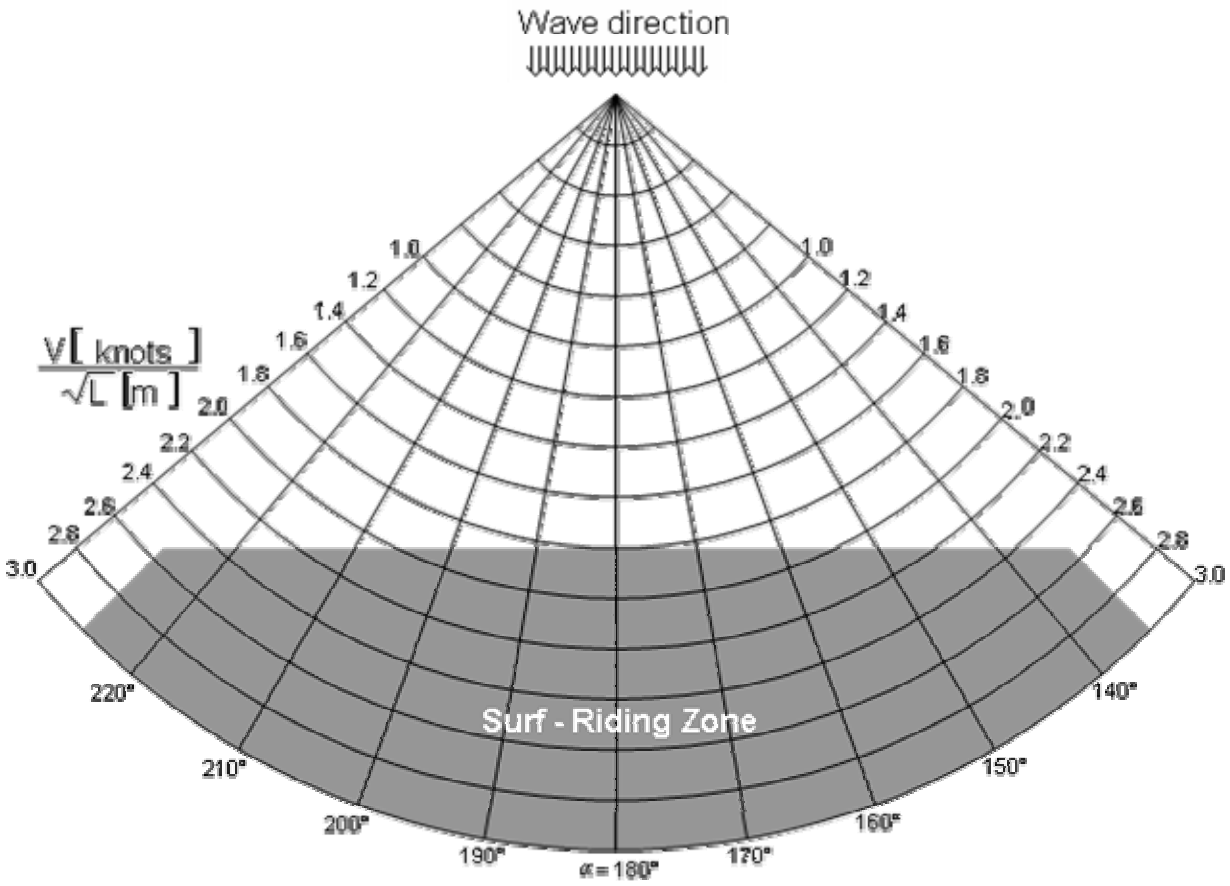

Figure 2: Risk of surf-riding in following or quartering seas

4.2.2 For successive high-wave attack

4.2.2.1 When the average wave length is larger than 0.8 L and the significant wave height is larger than 0.04 L, and at the same time some indices of dangerous behaviour of the ship can be clearly seen, the master should pay attention not to enter in the dangerous zone as indicated in figure 3. When the ship is situated in this dangerous zone, the ship speed should be reduced or the ship course should be changed to prevent successive attack of high waves, which could induce the danger due to the reduction of intact stability, synchronous rolling motions, parametric rolling motions or combination of various phenomena.

4.2.2.2 The dangerous zone indicated in figure 3 corresponds to such conditions for which the encounter wave period (T_E) is nearly equal to double (i.e., about 1.8-3.0 times) of the wave period (T_W) (according to figure 1 or paragraph 1.4).

4.2.3 For synchronous rolling and parametric rolling motions

4.2.3.1 The master should prevent a synchronous rolling motion which will occur when the encounter wave period T_E is nearly equal to the natural rolling period of ship T_R.

4.2.3.2 For avoiding parametric rolling in following, quartering, head, bow or beam seas the course and speed of the ship should be selected in a way to avoid conditions for which the encounter period is close to the ship roll period ($T_E \approx T_R$) or the encounter period is close to one half of the ship roll period ($T_E \approx 0.5 \cdot T_R$).

4.2.3.3 The period of encounter T_E may be determined from figure 1 by entering with the ship's speed in knots, the encounter angle α and the wave period T_W.

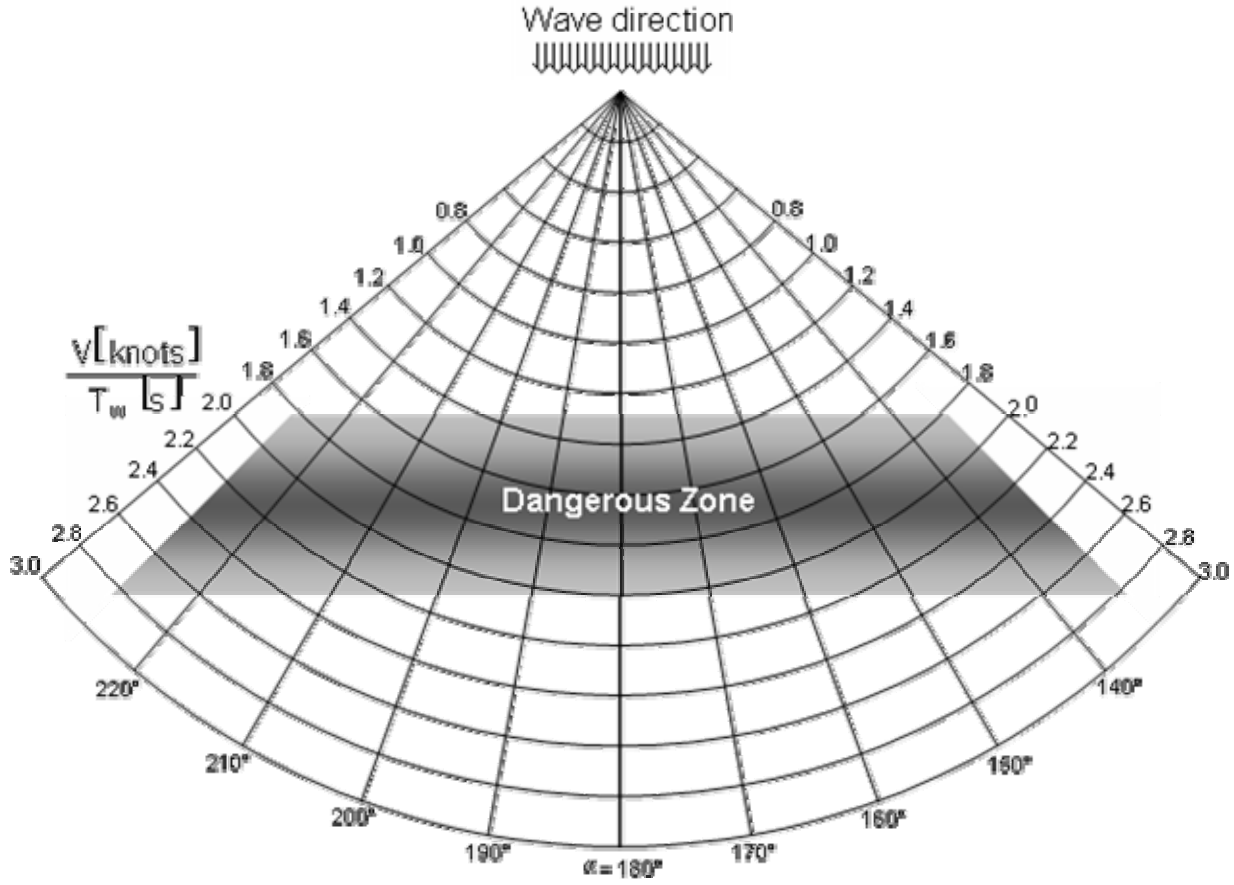

Figure 3: Risk of successive high wave attack in following and quartering seas

Abbreviations and symbols

Symbols	Explanation	Units
T_W	wave period	s
λ	wave length	m
T_E	encounter period with waves	s
α	angle of encounter (α = 0° in head sea, α = 90° for sea from starboard side)	degrees
V	ship's speed	knots
T_R	natural period of roll of ship	s
L	length of ship (between perpendiculars)	m