



South African Maritime Safety Authority

Ref: SM6/5/2/1

Date: 12 December 2012

Marine Notice No. 32 of 2012

Short comings in the safety culture on board South African fishing vessels, a comparison of trends 2003 to 2012.

TO ALL PRINCIPAL OFFICERS, OWNERS, OPERATORS, MANAGERS SKIPPER'S & SAFETY OFFICER'S OF FISHING VESSELS AND TRAINING INSTITUTIONS

Marine Notice No. 27 of 2011 is cancelled

Summary

This notice advises the fishing industry of the short comings identified in the safe operation of fishing vessels and the trends in compliance with safety legislation over the past ten years

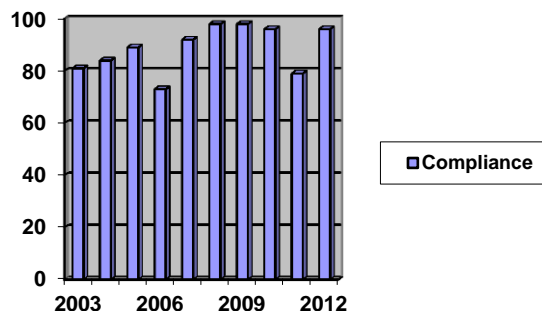
SAMSA has received 1926 checklists from the observers employed by Capricorn Fisheries Monitoring in the last ten years.

The trends in compliance with safety legislation are examined below.
The majority of the vessels recorded this year come from the deep sea trawling sector.

The overall improvement in the trends is an indicator that the safety culture in the industry is maturing.

Was access to the vessel safe?

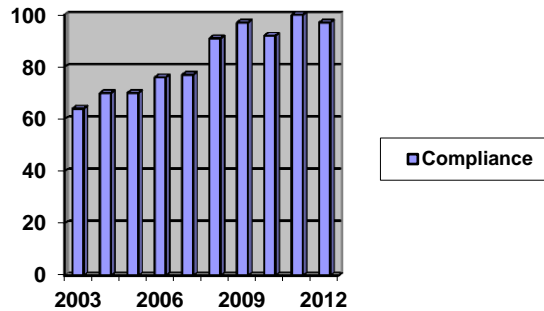
96% of vessels complied with this requirement of the Maritime Occupational Safety Regulations.



The improvement is noted.

Did you sign articles or submit your details for the crew list?

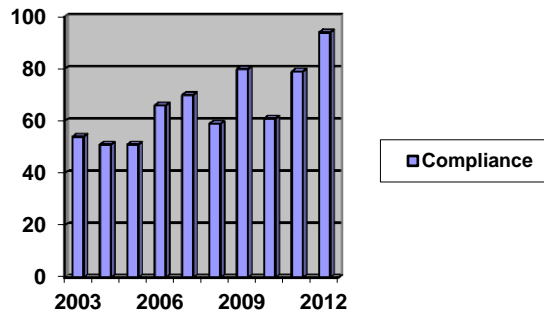
97% of skippers complied with the requirements of the Merchant Shipping Act or the Small Vessel Safety Regulations.



Crew lists are vital information to Search and Rescue services.

Were you instructed what to do if the general alarm was sounded?

94% of managers complied with the requirements of the Safe Manning Regulations to familiarize persons with their routine and emergency duties.

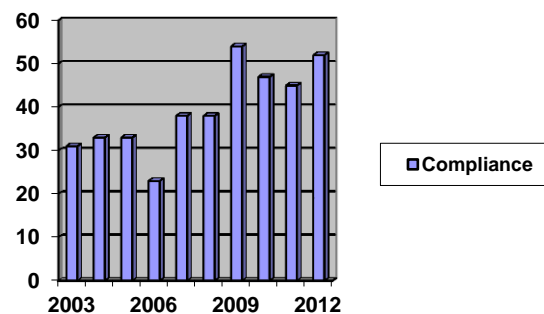


The improvement is welcomed. There is no time to tell people what to do in an emergency situation. It is management's responsibility to ensure that skippers familiarize new persons onboard.

Were the crew exercised in fire drills?

The trend is of great concern. The last thing a skipper needs is a crew who do not know what to do in an emergency. Time is not on your side, there is nothing more frightening than fire at sea.

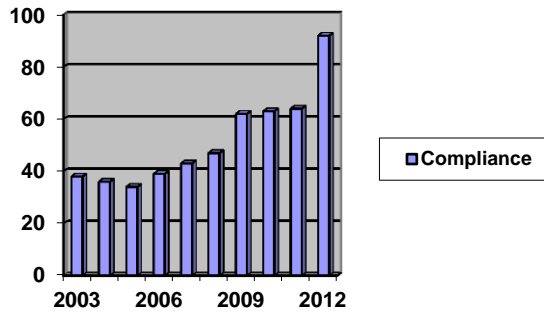
As a minimum the Merchant Shipping Act requires skippers to hold fire drills at least once a month. We accept that observers are not always onboard for 30 days and may have missed the drill, however the negative trend is worrying.



The Act prescribes the minimum period between drills; a more suitable regime would be to have a drill within 24 hours of sailing and then every week.

Were the crew exercised in boat drill?

As a minimum the Merchant Shipping Act requires skippers to hold fire drills at least once a month. We accept that observers are not always onboard for 30 days and may have missed the drill.

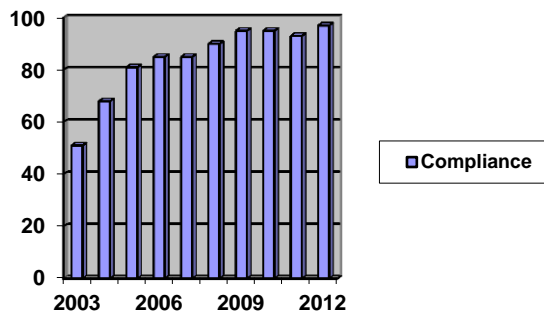


The major improvement is welcomed.

Ships usually sink in the worst weather, when the launching and getting into a liferaft could not be more difficult. Does your crew know how to put on a lifejacket and jump into the water; do you really want to waste time teaching them when it really happens? In a recent incident involving a container ship the crew had to abandon ship in extremely heavy weather conditions. When the crew was interviewed they commented that the Master was fanatical about drills and realized that these continued realistic exercises had saved their lives.

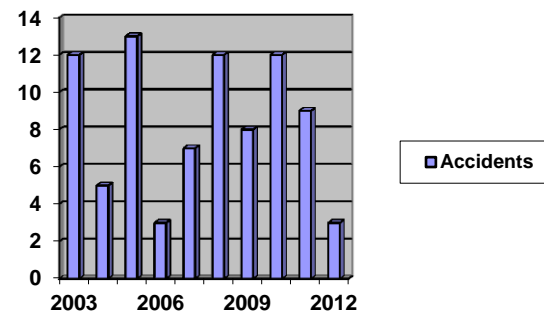
Did the crew wear safety gear while working on deck?

97% of skippers complied with the requirements of the Maritime Occupational Safety Regulations that require appropriate safety gear to be supplied and it is used.



To the few that do not bother, both skippers and safety officers, you have a statutory and moral responsibility to ensure that safety gear is being used by the crew.

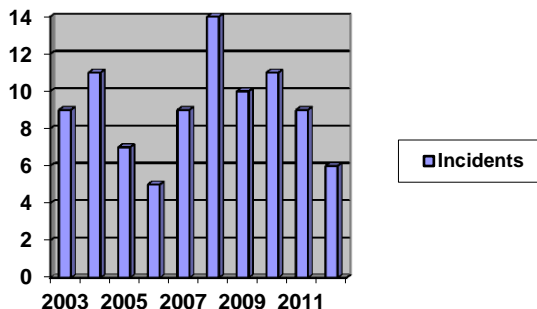
Were there any accidents to the crew?



Fishing is recognized as one of the most dangerous occupations in the world; continuous vigilance is required to bring this to the standard required.

Are there signs of alcohol or drug abuse onboard?

The Merchant Shipping Act forbids anybody who is drunk to report to or be onboard a vessel.



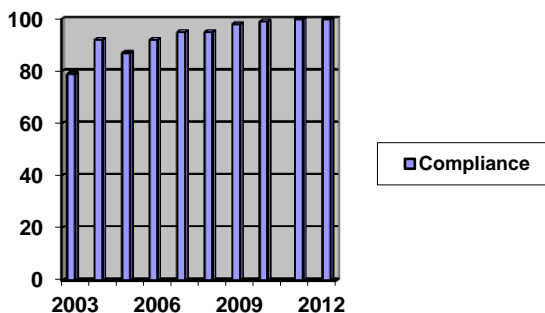
The high incidence of reports is of serious concern. Managers and skippers **must** refuse to take onboard anybody thought to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. They are a danger to their ship mates and themselves.

SAMSA offers drug and alcohol abuse workshops, at no cost, to the industry. If you would like SAMSA to hold a presentation(s) to crew members, please contact Ms Nolundi Dubase at 021 421 6170 or ndubase@samsa.org.za.

Was non-biodegradable garbage retained onboard?

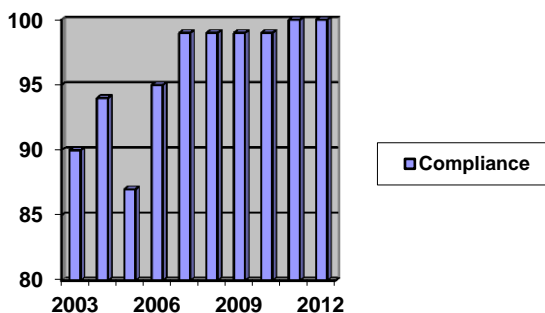
The **100%** compliance trend is welcomed, let us keep it there.

The Marine Pollution (Prevention of Pollution from Ships) Act governs what may be disposed of and at what distance from land.

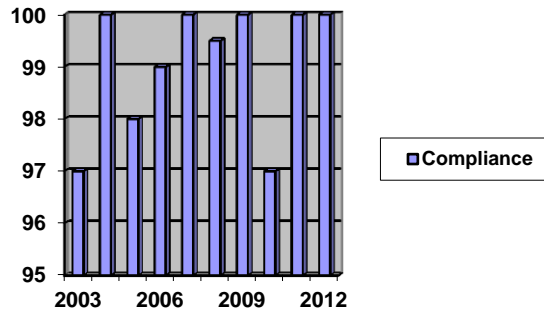


Are liferafts correctly secured with hydrostatic releases and not lashed down?

The **100%** compliance trend is welcomed, let us keep it there.



Was there a watchkeeping Officer on the bridge while steaming?
100% compliance with the requirements of the Safe Manning Regulations.



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