

**29TH ANNUAL MEETING – SEPTEMBER 2007**

(Proposal by Denmark (in respect of Faeroe Islands and Greenland))

Boarding Ladders**(ADOPTED)****Background:**

At the NAFO Inspectors Workshop held in Brussels during 25th to 27th January 2005, the inspectors expressed a need for a reinstatement of provisions concerning the construction and use of boarding ladders into the then present NAFO CEM (FC Doc. 04/1). Following the STACTIC meeting in Reykjavik in April 2005, Denmark (in respect of Greenland and Faeroe Islands) took the task of looking into this issue.

A proposal regarding boarding ladders (STACTIC W.P. 05/22) was tabled at the STACTIC annual meeting in Tallin, September 2005. The proposal was turned down as the mandate to effect these changes was questioned. Greenland has reconsidered the proposal and has found no legal implications. A similar proposal has been adopted by NEAFC in 2006 and is included as Annex 14 in NEAFC scheme of control and enforcement.

In the present CEM only one sentence describes boarding ladders:

Article 30 – Obligations of Vessel Masters During Inspection***1. The master of a fishing vessel shall:***

- c) *provide a boarding ladder which is in conformity with recommendations concerning pilot ladders adopted by the International Maritime Organisation*

In the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), Torremolinos protocol of 1993 the following recommendations are stated concerning pilot ladders:

Chapter VI - Protection of the crew***(7) Embarkation ladders***

- (a) *Handholds shall be provided to ensure a safe passage from the deck to the head of the ladder and vice versa.*
- (b) *The steps of the ladder shall be:*
 - (i) *made of hardwood, free from knots or other irregularities, smoothly machined and free from sharp edges and splinters, or of suitable material of equivalent properties;*
 - (ii) *provided with an effective non-slip surface either by longitudinal grooving or by the application of an approved non-slip coating*
 - (iii) *not less than 480 mm long, 115 mm wide and 25 mm in depth, excluding any non-slip surface or coating;*

- (iv) *equally spaced not less than 300 mm or more than 380 mm apart and secured in such a manner that they will remain horizontal.*
- (c) *The side ropes of the ladder shall consist of two uncovered manila ropes not less than 65 mm in circumference on each side. Each rope shall be continuous with no joints below the top step. Other materials may be used provided the dimensions, breaking strain, weathering, stretching and gripping properties are at least equivalent to those manila rope. All rope ends shall be secured to prevent unravelling.*

The above-mentioned recommendations from the IMO are scarce compared to the provisions in the NAFO CEM (FC/DOC. 02/9). The IMO provisions have been designed with a near port boarding in mind, and are not intended for boarding vessels at high seas. The provisions in the IMO lack descriptions of ladder efficiency, purpose, maintenance, replacement of steps, batten requirements, gateway passage, lighting of ladder, lifebuoy, ladder placement and rigging supervision.

Provisions regarding mechanical pilot hoists are not included in the CEM. Since the usages of mechanical pilot hoists are becoming more frequent on larger vessels, Denmark (in respect of Greenland and the Faeroe Islands) believes that the CEM should include provisions regarding the usage of such a device. The European Maritime Pilots' Association (EMPA) has some recommendations concerning mechanical pilot hoists. Denmark (in respect of Greenland and the Faeroe Islands) therefore suggests that the CEM being amended accordingly.

Proposal:

To ensure safe boarding of the inspectors it would be most adequate if detailed provisions are reinstated in the CEM carried onboard the inspection vessels. Denmark (in respect of Greenland and the Faeroe Islands) suggests an amendment of the boarding ladder provisions stated in the CEM. It is recommended to incorporate the enclosed annex, an amended version of the boarding ladder provisions in the previous CEM. This will in addition necessitate an amendment of Article 30, paragraph 1 (c). Furthermore an implementation of provisions regarding mechanical pilot hoists will require an additional section (Article 30, 1. (d)). Following these recommendations Article 30 will be altered as following:

Article 30 – Obligations of Vessel Masters During Inspection

1. The master of a fishing vessel shall:

- c) provide a boarding ladder constructed and used as described in **Annex nn**.
- d) if a mechanical pilot hoist is provided, ensure that its ancillary equipment are of a type approved by the national administration. It shall be of such design and construction as to ensure that the pilot can be embarked and disembarked in a safe manner including a safe access from the hoist to the deck and vice versa. A pilot ladder complying with the provisions of paragraph 1.c of this article shall be kept on deck adjacent to the hoist and available for immediate use.

ANNEX nn**CONSTRUCTION AND USE OF BOARDING LADDERS**

1. A boarding ladder shall be provided which shall be efficient for the purpose of enabling inspectors to embark and disembark safely at sea. The boarding ladder shall be kept clean and in good order.
2. The ladder shall be positioned and secured so that:
 - (a) it is clear of any possible discharges from the vessel;
 - (b) it is clear of the finer lines and as far as practicable in the midlength of the vessel;
 - (c) each step rests firmly against the vessel's side.
3. The steps of the boarding ladder shall:
 - (a) be of hardwood or other material of equivalent properties, made in one piece free of knots; the four lowest steps may be made of rubber of sufficient strength and stiffness, or of other suitable material of equivalent characteristics;
 - (b) have an efficient non-slip surface;
 - (c) be not less than 480 mm long, 115 mm wide, and 23 mm in thickness, excluding any non-slip device or grooving;
 - (d) be equally spaced not less than 300 mm or more than 380 mm apart;
 - (e) be secured in such a manner that they will remain horizontal.
4. No boarding ladder shall have more than two replacement steps which are secured in position by a method different from that used in the original construction of the ladder and any steps so secured shall be replaced, as soon as reasonably practicable, by steps secured in position by the method used in the original construction of the ladder. When any replacement step is secured to the side ropes of the boarding ladder by means of grooves in the side of the step, such grooves shall be in the longer sides of the steps.
5. The side ropes of the ladder shall consist of two uncovered manila or equivalent ropes not less than 60 mm in circumference on each side; each rope shall be left uncovered by any other material and be continuous with no joints below the top step; two main ropes, properly secured to the vessel and not less than 65 mm in circumference, and a safety line shall be kept at hand ready for use if required.
6. Battens made of hardwood, or other material of equivalent properties, in one piece, free of knots and between 1,8 and 2 m long, shall be provided at such intervals as will prevent the boarding ladder from twisting. The lowest batten shall be on the fifth step from the bottom of the ladder and the interval between any batten and the next shall not exceed nine steps.
7. Means shall be provided to ensure safe and convenient passage for inspectors embarking on or disembarking from the vessel between the head of the boarding ladder or of any accommodation ladder or other appliance provided. Where such passage is by means of a gateway in the rails or bulwark, adequate handholds shall be provided. Where such passage is by means of a bulwark ladder, such ladder shall be securely attached to the bulwark rail or platform and two handhold stanchions shall be fitted at the point of boarding or leaving the vessel not less than 0,70 m or more than 0,80 m apart. Each stanchion shall be rigidly secured to the vessel's structure at or near its base and also at a higher point, shall be not less than 40 mm in diameter, and shall extend not less than 1,20 m above the top of the bulwark.

8. Lighting shall be provided at night so that both the boarding ladder overside and also the position where the inspector boards the vessel shall be adequately lit. A lifebuoy equipped with a self-igniting light shall be kept at hand ready for use. A heaving line shall be kept at hand ready for use if required.
9. Means shall be provided to enable the boarding ladder to be used on either side of the vessel. The inspector in charge may indicate which side he would like the boarding ladder to be positioned.
10. The rigging of the ladder and the embarkation and disembarkation of an inspector shall be supervised by a responsible officer of the vessel. The responsible officer shall be in radio contact with the bridge.
11. Where on any vessel constructional features such as rubbing bands would prevent the implementation of any of these provisions, special arrangements shall be made to ensure that inspectors are able to embark and disembark safely.