



BRIDGE WATCH ALARM SYSTEM



- HELMET ELEMENT 6 'Navigation' – Item 1 'Safe Navigation Procedures'
- SIRE 2.0 Questionnaire – 4. Navigation and Communications Q. 4.1.5
- OCIMF – Guide for Navigational Audits Section 3.29
- RIGHTSHIP Inspection Questionnaire – Section 3.1, 3.5, 3.12 (Navigation)
- SOLAS Chapter V, Regulation 19.2.2.3
- IMO MSC.1/Circ. 1474
- IMO MSC.128(75) Performance Standards for a Bridge Navigational Watch Alarm System

INCIDENT

During a dynamic Navigational audit, our Auditor, when attending the vessel's Bridge, noticed that the Bridge Navigational Watch Alarm System (BNWAS) was deactivated, while its key was still on the activation switch. The vessel was sailing in open-waters using the auto-pilot and our Auditor consulted the Master to reactivate the system and retain the key always at his office.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

BNWAS is a monitoring and alarm system for notifying the navigational officers or the Master, when the officer on watch (OOW) does not respond or is not in position to perform his watch duties efficiently. BNWAS warnings are given in case of watchkeeper's incapacity due to accident, sickness or in the event of a security breach, e.g., piracy and/or hijacking. The BNWAS should remain operational at all times and only the Master has the authority to switch it off. A common finding of numerous incident investigations (groundings, pollutions and collisions) is that the BNWAS was either turned off or out of service.

BEST PRACTICES

- Ensure accurate procedure exist regarding the proper operation of the BNWAS.
- The Master is aware that they must hold system's key in a safe and not easily accessible place.
- Change maker's system password and inform only the Master.
- Never disclose system's password.
- Keep in mind that various models of VDR recorders indicate whether the BNWAS is disabled.
- Perform frequent performance tests and keep records to evidence system's functionality.

