

11 Collision Regulations

NOTE

The "*Collision Regulations*" are the *International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, 1972* with Canadian modifications. The *Collision Regulations* are amended from time to time to give effect to international and Canadian amendments as necessary. These regulations may be accessed through the Transport Canada website at [Collision Regulations](#).

1 Special rules and provisions of a local nature

- 1.1 Special rules or provisions, where applicable, are shown as "Canadian Modifications" and immediately follow the appropriate international rule to which they apply.
- 1.2 Other provisions regulating navigational conduct in Canadian waters may be found in the following:
 - .1 Vessel Operation Restriction *Regulations*,
 - .2 Navigation Safety Regulations, 2020, and
 - .3 *Special regulations made by port and harbour authorities*.

2 Non-displacement craft

- 2.1 Non-displacement vessels including air cushion vessels (ACVs) may be encountered in all waters.
- 2.2 ACVs are very maneuverable and create minimum wake. When operating at high speed in the non-displacement mode these vessels are capable of making rapid course alterations and only require a short stopping distance. Conversely, when maneuvering at relatively low speed similar to a conventional vessel, they have poor directional control and create considerable wake.
- 2.3 At present, all ACVs operating in Canadian waters are fully amphibious and are propelled and steered by airscrews, rudders and controllable air ducts. Having virtually no contact with the surface over which they operate, they create no wake when traveling at high speed, but when the wind is on the beam or when turning, they have considerable drift or yaw angles. The direction of their bows, and the aspect of their navigation lights, which are identical to those of a similar sized conventional vessel, may not provide a true indication of their direction of motion. To indicate this, all ACVs when operating in the non-displacement mode are required to display an all-round flashing yellow light, flashing at 120 flashes or more per minute.
- 2.4 Mariners on conventional vessels in the vicinity of an ACV should take due note of the true track of the ACV when interpreting apparent collision situations and executing avoiding action.
- 2.5 Amphibious ACVs generate high noise levels, consequently sound signals made by other vessels may not be heard by the operator on the ACV.
- 2.6 Since amphibious ACVs operate with zero draught, they frequently navigate outside normal shipping channels. Unless displaying distress signals, no action should be taken to warn them, report them or follow them.
- 2.7 With the exception of the *Collision Regulations*, amphibious ACVs under Canadian jurisdiction are generally not required to comply with regulations made under the *Canada Shipping Act, 2001* (CSA 2001).

Alternative means of ensuring at least an equivalent level of safety to that of a conventional vessel engaged in similar operations are administered under the *Aeronautics Act*, conforming to the IMO "Code of Safety for Dynamically Supported Craft".

4 Signals for dredging or underwater operations

- 4.1 Vessels engaged in dredging or underwater operations, when restricted in their ability to maneuver, are required to display the lights and shapes as described in Rule 27(b) and (d).
- 4.2 A rigid replica of the International Code Flag "A" is an acceptable alternative to the shapes specified in Rule 27(d). This provision only applies to small vessels restricted in their ability to maneuver and that are engaged in diving operations. Vessels engaged in dredging and underwater operations, other than diving, are not permitted to use this signal.
- 4.3 This rigid replica is to be displayed on board the vessel to ensure its all-round visibility and is to be not less than 1 metre in height to ensure that mariners in the vicinity can clearly see it and take appropriate action.
- 4.4 In waters where small vessels frequently operate, mariners will often see the "Diver Down" flag on floats or buoys. This flag is red with a diagonal white stripe running from the top of the hoist to the bottom of the fly and indicates an area where scuba diving or other diving activity is in progress. Vessels should keep well clear and proceed at slow speed.
- 4.5 Despite its general use, the "Diver Down" flag is not a substitute for the "A" flag, required by these regulations.

5 Improper use of searchlights and floodlights at sea

- 5.1 Mariners navigating in coastal waters have frequently reported the improper use of searchlights and floodlights. These reports are most common from mariners navigating the inner passage of British Columbia.
- 5.2 The improper use of these lights could affect the safe navigation of vessels and be construed as a violation of the *Collision Regulations* because the glare of such lights may:
 - .1 interferes with the night vision of mariners in the vicinity and prevents the keeping of a proper look-out - Rules 5 and 20(b)
 - .2 mask the navigation lights of the vessel using these lights, thereby making the determination of its heading and its type of operation impossible for other mariners - Rule 20 (impair distinctive character of navigation lights), and
 - .3 make it difficult for mariners to identify aids to navigation and their geographical location in the vicinity of the vessel using these lights - Rule 36 (mistaken for any aid to navigation or embarrass another vessel).
- 5.3 Several reports have also been made where a vessel using sodium vapor floodlights has mistakenly been reported as a vessel on fire. Such reports have alerted the Rescue Coordination Centre (RRC) or the Marine Rescue Sub-centre (MRSC) and rescue units have been dispatched in response to a false alarm. The use of these floodlights will ultimately tend to reduce the level of vigilance on the part of other mariners. This could result in an actual distress situation not being reported. Sodium vapor floodlights could also be mistaken for "flames on a vessel (as from a burning tar barrel, oil barrel, etc.)", which is a distress signal prescribed in Annex IV of the *Collision Regulations*.
- 5.4 Mariners are therefore warned that when using all types of searchlights and floodlights they must be properly directed or adequately screened to ensure that, under any conditions, such lights will not embarrass another vessel, show beyond the immediate vicinity of the vessel or be misinterpreted.
- 5.5 This notice does not prohibit a vessel from using any lights provided they cannot be mistaken for the lights specified in the *Collision Regulations*, or interfere with the keeping of a proper look-out. Similarly any vessel may fit or carry a searchlight or floodlight provided it is used in such a way as not to embarrass another vessel.

- 5.6 Small boat operators are reminded that night vision impairment can last for several minutes, even after the searchlight has been turned off. Operators using searchlights for search and identification purposes should reduce their speed so that action to avoid collision can be taken within the range of vision of the searchlight. The speed of the boat should not be increased until after the searchlight has been extinguished and the night vision of the operator has fully recovered.

6 Special lights and markings

- 6.1 The lights and markings described in this paragraph are not required by the *Collision Regulations*. Mariners, however, should be aware of their existence and purpose.

6.2 Night signal for vessels requiring health clearance

The International Code of Signals states that a vessel requiring "Health Clearance", may by night carry a red light over a white light in a vertical line about 2.0 m apart and visible all round the horizon. Such lights should only be exhibited within the vicinity of a port.

6.3 Boats servicing navigational aids

- .1 Small outboard motor boats are used in servicing navigational aids from Grondines-Est to Sarnia. These vessels have red hulls and are appropriately marked "CCG."
- .2 Mariners are cautioned to proceed at a safe speed when passing buoys being serviced by these boats.

6.4 Marking of fishing gear in all waters of the Pacific Coast under Canadian jurisdiction

- .1 A gill net operated from a commercial fishing vessel has attached to each end of it:
 - 1) by day, a buoy painted iridescent or plain orange and not less than 125 cm in circumference.
 - 2) by night, a lantern showing a white light.
- .2 A long line used in fishing is marked by a buoy attached to each end of the line.
- .3 A crab, shrimp or prawn trap set singly is marked by a buoy.

7 Radar Reflectors on Small Vessels

- 7.1 Small vessel owners/operators are reminded that their vessels can be very difficult to detect on radar and this can result in their being run-down or swamped by larger vessels.
- 7.2 Rule 40 of the *Collision Regulations* requires small vessels of less than 20 metres in length, or vessels constructed primarily of non-metallic materials, to fit or carry a radar reflector. These vessels offer very poor radar targets. An efficient radar reflector, if properly fitted, can effectively increase the echoing area of a vessel's corresponding radar target and greatly improve its chances of being detected.
- 7.3 Ship Safety Bulletin 07/2008 describes the safety features of using this device.

Authority: Transport Canada