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INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Working Party on Inland Water Transport

Working Party on the Standardization of Technical
and Safety Requirements in Inland Navigation

Thirty-second session
Geneva, 25-27 March 2008
Item 11 of the provisional agenda

TRANSPORT OF DISABLED PEOPLE

Revision of Resolution No. 25, “Guidelines for Passenger Vessels
also suited for carrying Disabled Persons”

Note by the secretariat

1. At its fifty-first session, the Working Party on Inland Water Transport (SC.3) took note of the request from the Inland Transport Committee to include the facilitation of transport of disabled people in its programme of work and noted that this issue was already covered in some of its instruments, such as the 1986 resolution No. 25, which contains Guidelines for Passenger Vessels also suited for carrying Disabled Persons and, more recently, resolution No. 61. The Working Party agreed to include a specific reference to this issue in its programme of work and asked the Working Party on the Standardization of Technical and Safety Requirements in Inland Navigation (SC.3/WP.3) at its next session to consider whether resolution No. 25 needed updating (ECE/TRANS/SC.3/178, para. 37).

2. The text of resolution No. 25 is enclosed in the annex. The Working Party may wish to decide whether additions or corrections need to be brought to the original text of the resolution and issue an appropriate recommendation to the Working Party on Inland Water Transport.

Annex

**GUIDELINES FOR PASSENGER VESSELS
ALSO SUITED FOR CARRYING DISABLED PERSONS**

Resolution No. 25

(adopted by the Working Party on Inland Water Transport
on 14 November 1986)

The Working Party on Inland Water Transport,

Noting the United Nations General Assembly resolutions 31/123 of 16 December 1976, by which it proclaimed the year 1981 International Year of Disabled Persons, 35/133 of 11 December 1980, 36/77 of 8 December 1981 and 37/52 of 3 December 1982, in which it adopted the World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons, and 37/53 of 3 December 1982, in which it proclaimed the period 1983-1992 United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons as a long-term plan of action ... and encouraged Member States to utilize this period as one of the means to implement the World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons,

Noting the request of the General Assembly to all organs, organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to formulate and undertake measures within their respective spheres of competence to ensure early implementation of the World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons and the request in particular, to the regional commissions to implement suitable programmes on the understanding that effective consultations and coordination between the various bodies are essential,

Recognizing the need to ensure the right of disabled persons to participate fully in the social life and development of their societies and to enjoy living conditions equal to those of their fellow citizens,

Considering the work done so far in the Group of Experts on the Standardization of Technical Requirements for Vessels and of Ships' Papers with respect to the modification of equipment and arrangements of normal passenger ships for use also by disabled persons,

Recommends Governments, international governmental organizations, economic or other unions and river commissions to take such steps as may be necessary to supplement their regulations on the construction and equipment of inland navigation vessels if necessary, taking into account the "Guidelines for passenger vessels also suited for carrying disabled persons", reproduced in the annex to this resolution;

Invites Governments, international governmental organizations, economic or other unions and river commissions to keep the secretariat informed of the measures adopted for this purpose;

Requests the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Europe to include periodically the question of the application of this resolution in the agenda of the Working Party on Inland Water Transport.

Annex to resolution No. 25

GUIDELINES FOR PASSENGER VESSELS
ALSO SUITED FOR CARRYING DISABLED PERSONS

1. Objective

The guidelines provide information concerning the adaptation of equipment and arrangements of passenger vessels to facilitate their use by disabled persons as well. They deal only with aspects which are not covered by the requirements in force or by recommendations for the construction of passenger vessels and their gear and equipment.

In this context, disabled persons are considered to be an integral part of the passengers using the vessel. These guidelines do not cover vessels specially built for the carriage of disabled persons. The guidelines may serve as a guide to ship owners and shipbuilders and particularly to facilitate proper planning for new construction or major conversion work. For this reason, they do not contain any binding regulations.

2. Passenger areas and lounges

2.1 Passenger areas

Passenger areas and corridors should have a clear width of at least 1.30 m so as to be accessible to wheelchairs.

Projecting elements should be avoided as much as possible and sharp edges should be rounded off. Especially wardrobes, shelves and cupboards should be set into walls; vertical pipes should as far as possible be located in recesses or corners.

Anti-slip coverings and coatings should be provided, particularly where there are gradients (ramps, cambers), in the gangways and corridors between the various lounges and between the lounges and the stairs. These coverings and coatings should not generate static electricity. Handrails or other means of support may also usefully be provided.

2.2 Gangways for disembarkation

The gangways for passenger disembarkation should have on each side a handrail at a height of 1 m and a second at the height of 0.75 m above the actual gangway. It is important for the handrails to extend in length 0.3 m beyond each end of the gangway. The gangway should have a minimum clear width of at least 0.9 m. Each railing should have at least three stanchions. To allow for the use of wheelchairs, the anti-slip cross-pieces should not be more than 0.3 m long and 0.03 m high. The holes of perforated surfaces should not be more than 0.01 m wide or

0.03 m long. The best method of solving the problem caused by the difference in level between the gangway and the pier or deck is to place movable flaps at each end of the gangway.^{1/}

2.3 Door sills and coamings

Door sills in the passenger areas should be avoided wherever possible. If they cannot be avoided, they should have a maximum height of 0.025 m. Open-deck coamings should be kept as low as possible taking into account other requirements in force. They can be eliminated by installing drainage wells, which may be covered by a close-mesh grille and drained outside the hull. If the door sills and coamings should have the height of more than 0.025 m, they should be removable, or consist of a low flexible rubber section or allow clearance by movable ramps.

2.4 Stairs, lifts

The stairs should not be too steep (maximum gradient 38° if possible). Stairs should be straight and placed in fore and aft direction. The steps should have a maximum height of 0.18 m and a minimum depth of 0.3 m. It is particularly important to ensure that the steps are anti-slip and have no projections or hollows.

The deck areas immediately before stairs or steps should be properly marked by different floor coverings. It is advisable to avoid single steps in the corridors, particularly in front of or behind doors. Lifts should have the following dimensions:

Cabin: at least 1.1 m wide, 1.4 m deep.

Lift door: at least 0.8 m clear width (if possible in the form of a sliding or folding door).

Control panel: between 0.9-1.2 m above the floor.

Handrails: 0.9 m above the floor.

There should be a clear space of at least 1.4 m x 1.4 m in front of the door of the lift.

2.5 Handrails and guardrails

The handrail on each side of the stairs should be placed at a height of 0.90 m above the front edge of the steps, follow the stair without interruption and extend approximately 0.3 m beyond the top and bottom of the stairs. The bars of the handrail should be circular, with a diameter of 0.04-0.05 m and the distance between the handrail and the wall should be at least 0.06 m. At the end of the handrails the bars should be bent towards the wall.

In addition, handrails should be provided for guidance and support along corridor walls and open-deck superstructures at a height of 0.9 m above the deck.

The height of the guardrails should be at least 1.1 m above the deck.

^{1/} Attention is drawn to the fact that a person in a wheelchair cannot cope with gradients of more than 1:20 (3°) without the help of another person, while ascending a gradient of more than 1:4 (14°) is very difficult even with the help of another person. If a landing stage necessitates a steeply inclined gangway for disembarkation (for example 1:4), the gangway should not exceed 2 m in length.

2.6 Doors

Except for those opening into corridors, the doors of passenger lounges should open outwards. When open, the doors should fold back against a wall and be capable of being held fast.

Special door-construction such as swing doors and revolving doors should be avoided. In the case of sliding doors, the lower guiderail should be sunk into the floor. The clear width of the doors should be at least 0.9 m in order to allow the easy passage of wheelchairs. In order to permit access to doors from the direction in which they open, there should be a minimum clearance of 0.5 m between the inner edge of the door-frame on the lock side and an adjacent perpendicular wall.

It should not be possible for unauthorized persons to lock or bar the doors of the passenger lounges.

The doors of toilets for disabled persons should open outwards or should be sliding doors. The locking device should be incorporated in the door handle.

2.7 Toilets and wash-rooms

At least one toilet and one wash-room should be accessible to disabled persons and adapted to their specific needs. Toilets suitable to disabled persons using wheelchairs should be at least 1.5 m x 1.82 m. The height of the toilet seat should be approximately 0.4 m. Handgrips for disabled persons should be fixed to the walls and attention given to ensuring that the fittings are quite stable and firmly attached. The toilet-paper holder should be well within reach and a person should be able to use it with one hand.

There should be a free space of 0.6 m height and 0.7 m width under the wash-basin.

The height of the upper side of the wash-basin above the floor should be 0.8-0.85 m.

If necessary the mirror should extend down as far as the wash-basin.

2.8 Cabins and public areas

Cabins for disabled persons should where possible be located on the same deck of the vessel, being preferably the deck on which the public area is located. They should be centrally situated and easily accessible. The counters of offices open to the public (for example, the information office and the ticket office) should be accessible to disabled persons in wheelchairs.

Tables and seats should be so constructed that they will not overturn when used for support. Clearance under tables should be 0.7 m in order to provide a sufficiently large space for the legs to knee-height.

When tables and seats in the lounges or on the deck are permanently fixed, a number of seats (one for every 100 passengers admitted but at least 4) should be specially adapted and reserved for persons suffering from motor disablement.

2.9 Measures for allergic persons

The furnishings shall as far as possible be made from non-allergenic material. The use of some areas should be prohibited for passengers who are accompanied by furred animals.

3. Information, communication and services

3.1 Markings, indications, signs and lighting

Sills, ramps, guardrails and handrails should be easily recognizable by their different colours.

In order to indicate special lounges and facilities for disabled persons the appropriate symbols specified in international regulations should be used. The direction indicator signs on the vessel and the instruction panels regarding conduct on board should be attached to the walls and not to the doors. The letters should be at least 0.015 m high. The text or symbol should stand out clearly against the main colour of the sign, which should in turn contrast with its background.

Signs indicating the emergency exits or containing prohibitions or obligations must be capable of being lit so as to be clearly visible. Stairs and areas accessible to disabled persons must at all times be well lit. Fluorescent tubes of the daylight type are the best form of artificial lighting.

3.2 Loudspeakers, public address systems

It should be possible to reach all the decks and cabins accessible to passengers by a loudspeaker system. The loudspeakers should be sufficiently powerful for messages to be clearly distinguished from background noise (for example, engines, ventilators, etc.). In the toilets and wash-rooms adapted for disabled persons a suitable device for calling a person for help should be provided.

3.3 Information

Details of information offices and possibilities of assistance should be displayed at appropriate points on the vessel.

4. Safety

4.1 General provisions

If the requirements in force do not provide for them the following safety measures must be given special attention.

4.2 Disembarkation

Passenger cabins for disabled persons should not be located below the disembarkation deck.

Vessels should have on each side of the vessel on the main deck at least one passenger disembarkation place with a minimum free opening for disembarkation of 1.5 m in width.

Accommodation for disabled persons should be so arranged that evacuation of all passengers is possible at any time to an open and sufficiently large deck. From this deck there should be in any case one emergency disembarkation opening of 1.0 m in width.

4.3 Special protection against fire

Liquid fuel having a flash-point of 55°C and lower should not be used, except for outboard engines for lifeboats.

Engine-rooms should be equipped with a fixed fire extinguishing installation of a suitable type. This installation should be capable of being activated from outside the engine-room.

There should be at least two independent fire-fighting pumps on board, one of which should be installed outside the main engine-room. The capacity of each pump and the number and distribution of hose connections should be such that any part of the vessel can be reached from at least two separate connections, each with a single length of hose.

Bulkheads and doors between public corridors and cabins and between the cabins themselves, bulkheads and doors of staircases connecting more than two decks, as well as ceilings and surface coatings of bulkheads and planking should be fire resistant.

On vessels with cabins, all accommodation and cabins for passengers, crew and other personnel should be equipped with suitable sprinkler systems. The fire-protection flaps prescribed for air and ventilation ducts should close automatically when the temperature of the air in the ducts exceeds 70°C. It should also be possible to close them manually.

4.4 Additional arrangements

Life-jackets should be kept within reach at appropriate points on the gangway giving access to exits. In addition, cabins suited for disabled persons should be provided with life-jackets.

The scheduled period of operation of the emergency power plant should be at least 60 minutes.

If the emergency power plant is not located above the bulkhead deck, the engine-room and the space occupied by the emergency power plant should be separated by at least one watertight compartment.

An emergency lighting system should be provided in the passenger accommodation and cabins.

An installation giving a general alarm by both optical and acoustic means should be provided.

Vessels should be equipped with a radiotelephone installation for:

Public communication;
Shipping notices;
Ship-to-ship communication.

4.5 Safety instructions

The safety instructions for the crew should state the special safety measures required for disabled persons in an emergency.

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