



## **Safety Familiarization – Not only is it smart...it's the law!**

Whether you're a crewmember, owner, or master of a fishing vessel, safety familiarization should be a priority for you. Under section 205(1) of Transport Canada's new Marine Personnel Regulations, the vessel's master and authorized representative are required to provide members of the crew with the proper on-board familiarization (as set out in TP4957) before they start to perform any duty on the vessel.

So, who exactly is required to receive this "on-board familiarization"? Many people presume that it only applies to new crewmembers, or those who have not yet received the mandatory Marine Emergency Duties (MED) training. Or, that the requirement only applies to larger longliners. However, a closer look at the regulations might surprise you!

TP4957 clearly states that the requirement for crewmembers to receive on-board familiarization applies to all fishing vessels and all crewmembers. However, the type and extent of on-board familiarization is determined by the "group" of the crewmember. These "groups", for example, include crewmembers who have not yet completed the required MED training, those who have completed the applicable MED training, and even those who hold a certificate of competency (ie. Fishing Masters).

At first glance, the "onboard familiarization" requirement may seem impractical. But, in most cases, it doesn't take a great deal of time, and it makes perfect sense. In fact, most masters would claim that it's simply common sense. The topics to be covered are relatively straight forward, and important for everyone to understand. They include: types of emergencies and individual response; chain of command and muster list; meanings of alarms and response; location, use and limitations of personal survival equipment; and general safety practices onboard.

For more information and details about on-board familiarization requirements, contact a Transport Canada Marine Safety office, or view the Marine Personnel Regulations online at [www.tc.gc.ca](http://www.tc.gc.ca).

***A crew that is familiar with safety equipment and safety procedures will be less prone to accidents and injuries and better prepared in the case of an emergency at sea.***