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## MARINE SAFETY INFORMATION BULLETIN

### PASSENGER WEIGHT AND STABILITY REQUIREMENTS

The Coast Guard amended its regulations regarding the Assumed Average Weight Per Person for persons on board passenger vessels. The number of persons permitted on inspected Small Passenger Vessels is determined by several factors, including the Assumed Average Weight Per Person (AAWPP) carried. The Final Rule published in the Federal Register on Tuesday, December 14, 2010 increased the AAWPP from 140/160 to 185 lbs. The full document can be viewed at the following website: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html>.

The new weight standard will be effective on December 1, 2011. Vessel owner/operators must certify compliance with new stability requirements by providing a written statement along with documentation supporting the total weight and number of passengers and crew permitted to be carried at the new AAWPP of 185 lbs even if no reduction in total persons is incurred. A number of options exist for this certification, including but not limited to the following: Weight ratio; Weight compensation; Direct verification; Stability calculations or a new stability proof test.

The simplest way to demonstrate compliance with the new AAWPP requirement is via weight ratio method. If documentation of the old AAWPP is not available, the most conservative weight commensurate with the vessel's service will be used. In formula, this means:

$$\text{New passenger and crew capacity} = \frac{\text{(Existing Capacity x Previous Assumed Weight / Person)}}{185 \text{ lbs}}$$

Vessel owners/operators are encouraged to voluntarily adopt the new AAWPP before December 1, 2011. If a vessel owner/operator submits compliance information or performs stability tests at 185 lbs AAWPP that indicate a reduction in passengers will be necessary, the reduction will not take effect until December 1, 2011, unless the vessel owner/operator elects to do so.

For further information, contact U.S. Coast Guard Sector Charleston Inspections Division at [SECCHASDOM@uscg.mil](mailto:SECCHASDOM@uscg.mil) or the phone number listed above.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "S. T. HIGMAN".

S. T. HIGMAN  
Commander, U.S. Coast Guard  
Chief, Prevention Department  
By direction