

to avoid the other vessel if her position is north or west of the position of your vessel.

Heading as a basis for determining the responsibility of who should take avoiding action suffers from a number of detracting factors in addition to the fact that it is not always obvious to another vessel. A lightly burdened vessel in a gale of wind is seldom heading in the direction in which she is going. The same situation, in some degree, results from the effects of currents. The steaming lights, in many instances, provide more of an expression of the intended than the actual course. Our postulated rule change, it should be noted, makes no reference to changes in the steaming lights required to be carried; only the manner of placing the burden of responsibility is altered.

Progress in nearly every field has been marked by the substitution of objective standards for personalized reactions as a basis for action. The international metre and gramme provide a common measure for nations to use in reckoning their commercial dealings. Can true direction provide a common standard for maritime regulations to prevent collisions?

## Clarifying the Rules of the Road at Sea from Commander P. Clissold, R.N.R.

It may not be humanly possible to draw up a code of rules for international use which are completely comprehensive and clear in every particular. The Rules for Preventing Collisions at Sea are not, and it would be useful to know the accepted interpretation of doubtful points. Criticism of the Rules is not here intended, and all references to the impact of radar upon their interpretation is omitted, as this question is now being studied by a Working Party. Suggested correct interpretations are added in brackets.

*Rule 3.* A vessel towing another vessel, and controlling the towed vessel only with difficulty (e.g. one ship towing another and only capable of altering course or speed gradually): should the two red lights (Rule 4 for vessels not under command) be carried in addition to the towing lights? (Yes.)

*Rule 8.* A power-driven pilot vessel when engaged on her station on pilotage duty and not at anchor: should she carry a stern light? (The Rule implies that she should not, but it is believed that some pilot vessels do. Since she carries side lights common-sense suggests that she should carry a stern light too.)

*Rule 9 (h).* Vessel when fishing fast by her gear to a rock, &c.: should she haul down the 3 white lights in a triangle? (Rule implies that she does, but implies that by day the cone is left up. Common-sense suggests that she would leave it up.)

*Rule 11.* A vessel at anchor by the stern (e.g. a trawler with her trawl fast to the bottom): should the anchor ball be hoisted aft and not forward? (Yes.)

*Rule 15 (b) (i).* If the whistle of a power-driven vessel breaks down, what signal should she make? (D upon the foghorn, as 'being unable to manœuvre as required by these Rules'.)

*Rule 15 (b) (ix).* Should a vessel engaged in fishing at anchor make the fog-signal for a vessel fishing or for a vessel at anchor? Similarly, a vessel working on a cable and at anchor.

*Notices to Mariners No. 7 (7).* Replenishment at sea. Should ships carry the usual steaming lights as well as not-under-command lights? (Side lights, but not masthead lights, should be shown.)