

Excerpts from
UNITED STATES
NAVY REGULATIONS
Chapter 26

Personality and Duties of the Navigating Officer

Art: 1007 (1) The Navigating officer is the officer detailed by the Chief of the Bureau of Navigation to perform the navigation duties and is the head of the navigation department of the ship. The Navigating officer shall be senior to all watch and division officers.

(2) If the navigating officer of the ship be detached, absent, placed under arrest, suspended from duty, or otherwise rendered incapable of performing the duties of his office, his duties shall devolve upon a line officer attached to and on board designated by the Commanding Officer.

(3) Aboard smaller ships, the executive officer may also be ordered to perform the duties of navigating officer.

Art: 1009 The navigating officer shall receive all orders relating to his navigating duties directly from the commanding officer, and shall make all reports in connection therewith directly to the commanding officer.

Art. 1010 (1) Previous to entering pilot waters, the navigating officer shall study charts, sailing directions, and other sources of information concerning the navigation of the ship therein, so that he may be prepared to give to the commanding officer any information or assistance required concerning his duty.

(2) When the ship is approaching land or shoals, or entering port, he shall give his careful attention to the course of the ship and the depth of the water.

(3) If he thinks the ship is running into danger, he shall at once notify the officer of the deck and advise him as to a safe course to be steered, and shall promptly report to the commanding officer. If the commanding officer is conning and the navigator thinks the ship is running into danger, he shall so inform the commanding officer and advise him as to a safe course to be steered.

(4) The duties mentioned herein shall be performed whether there be a pilot on board or not.

(5) In thick weather or when in doubt as to position, the navigator will make use of the available radio direction finder shore stations and the ship's radio direction finder and sound equipment for assisting in the determination of the ship's position.

Art: 1011 The navigating officer shall keep all sailing directions, light and beacon lists of the ship, corrected to date, in accordance with personal observations and such other reliable information as he may from time to time be supplied with, or be able to obtain; he shall see that the sources of this information are charged against the charts in the proper blank spaces in the chart catalogue; he shall see that all charts are corrected to date before being used. Copies of all information obtained by him affecting navigation shall be forwarded by the commanding officer to the Hydrographic Office.

Art. 1015 The navigating officer shall keep a book in which shall appear all original observations and computations, made for the purpose of navigating the ship, or copy thereof, with results and dates. This book shall be regarded as an official record of his performance of his duties in the navigation of the ship, and shall be subject to examination by superior authority.

Art. 1017 When fitting out, the navigating officer of a ship shall make a careful inspection of all parts of the ship confided to his care; of the steering apparatus in general, except the steering engine or steering motors; and of everything connected with the navigation outfit of the ship. Should he discover any defects or deficiencies he shall immediately make a detailed written report thereof to the commanding officer.

Art. 1018 (1) When under way, the navigating officer shall report in writing to the commanding officer the position of the ship at 8 a.m., at 12 m., and at 8 p.m., and such other times as the commanding officer may require.

(2) He shall take such observations or make such calculations concerning the position of the ship as the commanding officer may at any time require.

Art. 1019 (1) The navigating officer shall have charge of the preparation of all compass reports, in accordance with the instructions laid down in the prescribed forms as issued from time to time, and the compass records (both magnetic and gyro) which shall be a complete history of the compasses while on board ship. The compass records shall be signed by him on the last day of the quarter and shall be submitted to the commanding officer for his approval.

(2) When the ship is under way and the weather permits, he shall each day ascertain by observation the error of the standard compass and of the gyro compass and report the result to the commanding officer in writing. He shall also make frequent comparisons of the standard and gyro compasses. He shall, whenever practicable, obtain the errors of the radio direction finder and sound apparatus.

(3) He shall prepare and keep corrected tables of deviation of the standard, battle, maneuvering, and auxiliary battle compasses, copies of which shall be kept posted near these compasses in such position as to be accessible to the officer of the deck and such other officers concerned in the navigation of the ship. He shall also prepare, and keep corrected, tables of errors of the radio direction finder and sound apparatus, copies of which shall be kept posted near those direction finders and receivers.

(4) All courses and bearings that are entered in the log book as well as bearings for computation, shall be marked to show whether they are true, magnetic, or by the standard compass, and if the last case the ship's head "Per standard compass" must be stated and the deviation on that heading given.

(5) He shall not move the standard compass, or any of its attachments or compensating magnets or appurtenances, from the position in which they were placed and secured when the ship was commissioned unless authorized by the commanding officer.

(6) He shall frequently examine all the compasses of the ship and see that they are in good order and ready for use, and that the spare compasses are properly stored.

(7) He shall, when at sea, at least once each day, whenever shore radio stations or radio beacons or sound stations or buoys are within range, take bearings with the ship's radio direction finder and sound apparatus on such stations or buoys. He shall enter the results obtained in the ship's log, giving the approximate distance at which bearings were taken and the error or deviation found.

Art. 1022 (1) The navigation officer shall have charge of the preparation and care of the ship's log. It shall be his duty, subject to orders from the commanding officer, to see that the watch officers receive instructions relative to the correct manner of keeping the log as may be necessary to insure the proper preparation of same.

(2) He shall carefully examine the deck log book, see that it is prepared in accordance with Navy Regulations and the instructions issued from time to time, and call attention of the watch officers to any inaccuracies or omissions in their entries. He shall then have it accurately copied in the smooth form and placed before the watch officers daily for signature. The rough deck log and the quartermaster's notebook shall be retained as a permanent record on board for a period of 2 years except in obedience to a demand from a naval court or board or from the Navy Department or on decommissioning. At the end of the 2-year period, or on decommissioning, the rough deck log and the quartermaster's notebook shall be forwarded to the Bureau of Navigation for disposition.

(3) He shall enter each day in the log the ship's position, the error of the gyrocompass in use, the magnetic variation, the deviation of the standard magnetic compass, the amounts of fuel and water expended during the day and the quantity of each remaining on hand at midnight closing the day, and such other data as may be required.

(4) He shall immediately before leaving and as soon as possible after entering port cause the draft of the ship, forward and aft, to be carefully taken and entered in the log.

Art. 1023 (1) The navigating officer shall carefully prepare all hydrographic reports and meteorological returns required in accordance with instructions and forms from time to time and submit them to the commanding officer for transmission.

Art. 1024 (1) In battle, the navigating officer shall be the ship-control officer, and shall be stationed in the conning tower or elsewhere, as may be necessary, to enable him to assist the commanding officer in handling the ship. At such times he shall relieve the officer of the deck and shall himself act in that capacity. He shall relieve the deck during quarters