

Excerpts from
NAVY REGULATIONS
Chapter 28

OFFICERS OF THE DECK

Art. 1061 (1) The officer of the deck is the officer on watch in charge of the ship.

(2) The officer of the deck shall be responsible for the safety of the ship, subject, however, to any orders he may receive from the commanding officer.

(3) Every officer or other person on board the ship, whatever his rank, who is subject to the orders of the commanding officer, except the executive officer, shall be subordinate to the officer of the deck.

Art. 1062 (1) Before taking charge, an officer about to relieve the deck shall make himself thoroughly acquainted with the position of the ship with reference to vessels in sight, and to any land, shoals, or rocks which may be near; with the general condition of the weather, the course, speed, main engines and boilers in use, condition and amount of sail set, all unexecuted orders, and the orders of the commanding officer for the night; with the condition of the running lights and any other appliances required by law to be in operation or at hand in order to prevent collisions; and with the condition of the force on deck available for duty and the general condition of the ship.

(2) Before taking charge, when the ship is in squadron, he shall see that she is in her station; if out of her station he may decline to take charge until he has reported the fact to the commanding officer and received his orders.

(3) When at sea he may decline to relieve the deck until there is a watch up ready for duty. If the ship be in a perilous position he may also decline to relieve the deck until he has reported the fact to the commanding officer and received his orders.

Art. 1063 (1) When at sea, and especially when approaching land or in pilot waters, the officer of the deck shall keep himself informed of the position of the ship; whether land or lights are in sight, or whether either are likely to be seen, and of all other particulars which may be of use to him in keeping the ship out of danger. If approaching land or shoals he shall keep leadsmen in the chains and have the anchors and chains clear and ready for use.

(2) He shall remain in charge until regularly relieved, and shall not engage in any occupation which may distract his attention from duty.

(3) He shall see that the junior officers and the watch are at all times alert, at their stations, attentive, and ready for duty; that every necessary precaution is taken to prevent accidents; that a boat is always ready for lowering and the life buoys ready for letting go; that the lookouts are in place and vigilant and that they understand their duties. He shall exercise great care that the ship is skillfully steered and kept on her course, and shall keep a correct account of the courses, the speed, and leeway made. He shall see that the running lights are kept bright from sunset to sunrise and their condition reported every half hour; that during fog, when approaching vessels and at all other times the precautions required by law to prevent collisions are fully complied with; that when in pilot waters the

leads are kept going or that other means to ascertain the soundings are at hand and are frequently used; and that nothing is placed near the compasses that will change their errors.

(4) When in company with other ships he shall be very careful to keep in station; if unable to do so he shall report at once to the commanding officer.

(5) When the commanding officer is on the navigation bridge, the officer of the deck shall not change the course, alter the speed, nor perform important evolution without consulting him.

(6) He shall promptly report to the commanding officer all land, shoals, rocks, lighthouses, beacons, buoys, discolored water, vessels, or wrecks discovered; all changes in the weather or shifts of wind; all signals made; all changes of sail, speed, formation, or course by the senior officer present, or the ships in company; any change in course or speed made by himself; any marked change in the barometer, force of the wind, state of the sea, or marked indications of bad weather; the display of storm signals on shore; all serious accidents; the winding of the chronometers; the hours of 8 a.m., meridian, and 8 p.m.; when at sea, the latitude at meridian, if obtained; the movements of men-of-war, mail steamers, and other large vessels; and, in general, all occurrences worthy of notice.

(7) He shall not, unless to avoid immediate danger, change the course without directions from the commanding officer, and then he shall report the change to him as soon as possible. When on soundings, he shall regard advice from the Navigator as sufficient authority to change the course, but he shall at once report the change to the commanding officer.

(8) In time of war, or when hostilities may be expected, he shall not make any dispositions that will interfere with the immediate use of the armament. If at any time he sights a suspicious ship or other object that may by any possibility, have a hostile purpose, he shall instantly make preparations for battle, and inform the commanding officer.

(9) He shall not make any official signal, either by day or by night without authority from the commanding officer, except to warn ships of immediate danger. He shall see that a good lookout is kept for signals; that none is answered until understood; and that the authorized appliances for making signals of all kinds are at hand and ready for use, night and day. He shall see that all signals and official messages, including those transmitted orally, sent or received, are immediately recorded, noting the time and the vessel or vessels or station to or from which the signal was made.

(10) When there is danger of a collision he shall at once sound the signals for closing the water-tight doors.

(11) At sea he shall always cause the watch to be mustered at 8 p.m., and as frequently thereafter during the night as may be necessary in order to keep all present alert and ready for duty.

(12) He shall require the coxswains of both lifeboats to report to him daily at sunset the condition of the boats in respect to readiness for service; and at sea he shall require the coxswain of the lifeboat's crew of the watch to make the same report at the beginning of each watch.

(13) He shall see that the petty officer, or corporal, of the guard, or other person detailed for the purpose, makes the rounds of the ship, visiting all accessible parts below the main deck every half hour after 10 p.m., and until all hands or the idlers are called in the morning. During these rounds the petty officer,

or corporal, is to inspect the lights and the prisoners, and see if irregularities of any kind are taking place, reporting the result to the officer of the deck. The latter shall also require a junior officer of the watch, if there be one, to make these rounds every two hours, or oftener, if necessary when his services on deck can be spared.

Art. 1064. (1) The officer of the deck shall carry out the instructions laid down in the routine book, the weather and other circumstances permitting, modifying them as may be necessary to comply with the orders of the commanding and executive officers.

(2) When the bell or bugle of the flag or senior ship can be heard, ships shall follow her in striking the bell and in sounding routine calls.

Art. 1065. So far as his authority extends, the officer of the deck shall see that the regulations concerning salutes, honors, and distinctions are carefully observed.

Art. 1066. (1) The officer of the deck shall see that all officials come aboard or leave the ship receive the side honors to which they are entitled.

(2) He shall see that all persons coming alongside or visiting the ship are courteously treated.

(3) Unless prevented by urgent duty, he shall be at the gangway to receive, and shall accompany to the side, all commissioned officers or distinguished visitors. When so prevented, he shall send a junior officer of the watch to represent him.

Art. 1067. (1) The officer of the deck shall require all persons over whom he has authority to report to him or his representative upon leaving the ship, stating that they have permission to do so, and also to report their return on board.

(2) The absence from the gangway of an officer of the watch at the time of the departure or return of any officer is not to be construed by the latter as a sufficient reason for omitting this report.

(3) The officer of the deck shall report to the executive officer the departure and return of all officers senior to that officer.

Art. 1068. Whenever it may be necessary to turn over the engines by power when the ship is not under way, the officer of the deck shall first obtain permission to do so from the commanding officer, and shall station a competent person at the engine-room bell to give the necessary signals, taking every precaution against accident.

Art. 1069. When at anchor in a strong tideway, or with a strong wind blowing, the officer of the deck shall keep a drift lead over the side and, if possible, observe a range on shore, and take all other precautions necessary to ascertain at once if the ship drags.

Art. 1070. The officer of the deck shall carefully and patiently instruct the junior officers and crew in their respective duties, pointing out any mistakes made and how they may be avoided.

Art. 1071. (1) The officer of the deck shall bear in mind that his manner of performing duty has a great influence upon his discipline of the crew and the efficiency of the ship; that he should be dignified, discreet, zealous, energetic, and subordinate,

displaying a feeling of deference to superiors and a spirit of kindness, to inferiors. He shall himself scrupulously obey all orders and regulations, and require the same of his subordinates. He shall avoid the use of harsh language, and, while never permitting any duty to be performed in a careless, indifferent, or dilatory manner, he shall protect the crew from all unnecessary annoyances.

(2) He shall, when giving orders, use only the phraseology customary in the service, without any unnecessary repetition. He shall use a decided and authoritative tone, sufficiently loud only for the occasion. He shall, when giving orders that are to be repeated or passed, use the exact words proper to pass them, and not permit any changes or additions by his subordinates.

Art. 1072. In port the officer of the deck shall wear gloves and carry a spyglass or binocular.

Art. 1073. (1) When stores or supplies for the ship come alongside, the officer of the deck shall report the fact to the executive officer and notify the officer in whose charge they belong. He shall notify the medical officer of the ship when fresh provisions for the general mess come alongside.

(2) When boats, tenders, or lighters come alongside with stores, he shall have them cleared, and at the same time exercise due diligence to prevent the introduction of prohibited articles.

(3) He shall see that all articles to be sent away from the ship are carefully stowed in the boats or vessels receiving them so as to prevent injury.

Art. 1074. (1) The officer of the deck shall inform himself of all boats that come alongside or leave the ship.

(2) He shall report to the executive officer any contemplated movements of the ship's boats of which the latter is presumably not cognizant.

(3) When the boats of the ship are manned, he shall inspect them and see that they are in good order, that they have their regular crews, and that the latter are suitably clothed in the uniform of the day.

(4) He shall see that the keepers of the boats riding at the booms and astern unship the ensigns, except on prescribed occasions, that they lay in their oars, are generally attentive, do not lounge about or leave their boats, and give the proper salutes as laid down in the Regulations.

(5) He shall take care that boats alongside do not lie at the gangway while waiting, but off the boom or quarter out of the way of approaching boats, unless permission is given to haul out to the boom.

Art. 1075. (1) When a boat is sent to board the ship of the senior officer present, the officer of the deck shall see that a notebook is carried in which verbal orders received shall be immediately entered.

(2) The information derived from merchant vessels boarded shall be recorded permanently in a book kept for the purpose.

Art. 1076. The officer of the deck shall see that a lookout is kept on the ship's boats that are in sight and under sail, that aid may be promptly sent in case of accident.

Art.1077. The officer of the deck shall not, without permission from superior authority, permit the hatch tarpaulins to be used for any purpose except covering the hatches.

Art.1078.(1) In addition to the entries in the log required by Navy Regulations, the established forms, and by special instructions, the officer of the deck shall see that every circumstance of importance or interest occurring during his watch is noted in the deck log book. Upon being relieved he shall sign his name at the conclusion of his remarks.

(2) He shall exercise particular care that the meteorological observations are carefully taken and entered in the deck log, in accordance with instructions, and that the signs of approaching bad weather are noted and recorded.

(3) He shall enter the following particulars in the deck log:

(a) The name and rank, or rating, and service number of all persons who may join or be detached from the ship; all enlistments, transfers, discharges, deaths, and desertions; the names of all persons made prisoners by an enemy, and of all absent without leave; the names of all passengers, with times of coming aboard and leaving; courses steered and distance sailed; the time when any particular evolution, exercise, or any other service was performed; the nature and extent of all punishments inflicted, with the name of the offender and his offense; when at sea, the sighting of land, lightships, and of all dangers to navigation.

(b) Any accident to the ship, including all cases of grounding, and the loss or injury of boats, spars, sails, rigging, and stores, with all the attendant circumstances and the extent of the injury.

(c) Full particulars of any and every injury, accident, or casualty, however slight, among the officers, crew, or passengers on board.

(d) All alterations made in the daily allowance of provisions or fresh water per man with the authority and reasons therefor.

(e) A mention of the employment of any hired vessel, with a statement of her tonnage, the name of her master or owner, the number of her crew, for what purpose she is employed, and the authority therefor.

(f) Every occasion upon which fire in the furnace is lighted, hauled, or allowed to die out with the hour of each change. If the engines are in operation, the all-shaft average revolutions per minute for each hour and the corresponding distance run in nautical miles and tenths.

(g) The reading of all draft marks before leaving and after entering port. The draft shall also be entered before and after fueling, and if fuel is taken from a collier, the corresponding drafts of the fuel ship.

(h) The dates of commencement and completion of each inventory of equipage taken under the requirements of articles 1222(2) and 1393.

(i) Daily report by ordnance gunner of temperature of magazines. Weekly report of tests of flooding systems and inspection of ammunition spaces.

(j) The state of the weather and the sea will be entered in the columns of the log, but will not be duplicated in the watch officer's remarks unless circumstances render it necessary to a proper

interpretation of the columns. Watch officers will carefully supervise the entries in the columns, for which they are responsible.

(k) Punishments inflicted (See Art. 1079).

(l) Weekly examination of shell rooms containing loaded shell, test of flood cocks, with appropriate remarks as to conditions.

(m) Bearings and angles taken after anchoring.

(n) Whenever provisions are delivered on board by a contractor the exact quantity of each article delivered, the contractor's name and the name of the officer making the inspection.

(o) All cases of confinement and release of prisoners.

(p) Time taken to hold collision drill.

(q) Summary of orders upon getting underway and duty performed, when directed by commanding officer.

(r) Amount of water carried in double bottoms not specially fitted for carrying reserve feed water.

(s) Result of soundings taken in accordance with 884(2).

Art. 1079. Entries in the log regarding punishments shall include the name, rank, or rating and service number of the offender, the date and nature of the offense, and the kind and degree of punishments. The date of every suspension, arrest, confinement, and restoration to duty shall also be entered upon the log book.

Art. 1080. When at sea the officer of the deck shall require:

(a) The chief boatswain or boatswain, during the morning watch, to examine the conditions of the chains, boats, boat booms and rigging and report the result.

(b) The chief carpenter, or carpenter, or one of his mates to examine, during the afternoon watch each day, all airports that should be closed, and to inspect each compartment which touches either the shell of the ship or the boundary of any liquid-containing compartment, if such compartment is not assigned to the cognizance of any one department and is accessible through a dog-controlled hatch or door. When compartments are known to be leaking or there is reason to suspect leakage, the chief carpenter, or carpenter, or another officer especially designated, shall himself examine the state of the water at least twice daily, and shall report the conditions found at 0800 and 2000. Immediately after any occurrence likely to cause leakage, all compartments which might have been affected shall be inspected and the conditions found shall be immediately reported.

(c) Designated personnel to make inspections twice each watch between 2000 and 0800, while at sea, to insure that all lower deck airports are closed, and that the prescribed compartmentation is maintained.

(d) The chief gunner or gunner, or one of his mates, to examine the guns and see that they are properly secured, reporting the result at least twice during each watch.