



# *USCG MARINE SAFETY CENTER BULLETIN*

## SOLAS

BULLETIN #02-97

### Plan Review for Implementation of the Retroactive Fire Safety Amendments

The intent of this bulletin is to reiterate the deadlines for expeditious completion of the plan review necessary for verification of compliance with the 1994 retroactive fire safety amendments (RFSAs). The major focus of the U. S. Coast Guard relative to the RFSAs is to evaluate the level of compliance with international regulations regarding separation of escape stairways from enclosed spaces where fires are likely to originate. Compliance for all existing ships is required no later than October 1, 1997. In accordance with the Coast Guard's Navigation and Inspection Circular (NVIC) 495, "Fire Safety Standards for Foreign Passenger Vessels Constructed before 1 October 1994", to meet this deadline, plans showing all details of compliance must be submitted to the USCG no later than April 1, 1997.

For those ships which have had partial or no plan review previously conducted by the Coast Guard, three complete sets of plans **marked approved by the Flag Administration** must be submitted for review. For ships which have undergone complete plan review within the last 5 years, additional detailed plan review will generally be limited to protection of escape stairways. Within certain specifications, the USCG may agree to ~~re~~review plans for a particular ship already on file for compliance with the RFSAs, instead of requiring submission of another set of plans.

NVIC 4-95 contains detailed information on the USCG plan review process for compliance with the RFSAs. To date, X percent of the foreign passenger ships trading from U.S. ports, have submitted the necessary plans and begun the RFSAs control verification process. Of this number, X percent have completed the plan review process. We estimate that approximately X percent of foreign passenger ships remain to be checked. Those ships whose plans are not received **April 1, 1997**, are **not** guaranteed completed plan review by October 1, 1997. Those ships that have not completed the full RFSAs control verification process **October 1, 1997**, will **not** be allowed to board U.S. passengers from U.S. ports until the RFSAs control verification process is completed.

*The USCG Marine Safety Center is available to answer questions at any time. Please contact LCDR Thad Sliwinski at (202)366-6481 or fax your inquiry to (202)366-3877.*

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