

Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Finland  
N.B. Unofficial translation. Legally valid only in Finnish and Swedish

**No. 820/2012**

**Government Decree on Catering for Seafarers on Board Ships**

The following is enacted in accordance with the decision of the Government under sections 14 and 15 of the Act on the Working and Living Environment and Catering for Seafarers on Board Ships ([395/2012](#)):

**Section 1**

**Scope of application**

This Act lays down provisions on catering for seafarers on board ships.

In the case of ships in domestic traffic derogations from the provisions of this Decree, except for sections 2, 7(3) and 9 - 11, may be permitted if adequate and healthy food can be provided in some other way.

**Section 2**

**The quality of food and the meals provided**

The food provided shall be varied and high in nutritional value and it must meet the seafarers' needs in respect of both quantity and composition. The food provided must be of uniform quality for all seafarers on board.

Ships shall be provided with an adequate amount of drinking water that meets the requirements of the Health Protection Act ([763/1994](#)).

Three meals and two snacks shall be provided daily. Employees working on board between 8 pm and 6 am shall be provided with food for the night unless otherwise agreed between the employer and the employees.

**Section 3**

**The preparation and service of meals**

Adequate hygiene shall be ensured in the preparation and service of meals. The Food Act ([23/2006](#)) lays down provisions on the certificate granted by the Finnish Food Safety Authority which persons handling food that is easily spoilt must have to indicate their competence in food hygiene.

If semi-finished food products or convenience food are used, their nutritional value must correspond to that of fresh products and they must be purchased from reliable manufacturers or suppliers.

**Section 4**

**Information to be recorded in the ship's food diary**

A food diary shall be kept monthly on board ships. The following information must be recorded in the food diary:

- 1) the country and location from where the food was purchased, the date of purchase and the supplier of the food;
- 2) the date when the food was used;
- 3) food stuffs that have remained unused;
- 4) on how many days each seafarer has had meals on board;
- 5) meals provided, the number of persons that have taken them, courses served and the quantities of food stuffs used for the meals;
- 6) on how many days persons other than seafarers have had meals on board and the meals provided to them with the quantities used for these meals;
- 7) food poisonings probably caused by improper food hygiene;
- 8) catering inspections, the persons who have participated in them and the results of the inspections.

A food diary referred to in subsection 1 is not necessary in the case of passenger ships where passengers and seafarers have common catering services.

## **Section 5**

### **Manuals and instructions**

Ships shall be provided with appropriate instructions for the preparation, storage and service of food and drinking water.

## **Section 6**

### **Storage of food**

The Food Act lays down provisions on the general requirements concerning food quality and hygiene and on the storage of food.

## **Section 7**

### **Drinking water tanks**

A ship shall, in consideration of its trading area and opportunities to obtain water, have adequately capacious tanks for the storage of drinking water. The tanks must be made of such materials that no hazardous substances from them are dissolved in the drinking water. The tanks must be kept clean and they must be thoroughly cleaned once a year.

It shall be possible to empty the drinking water tanks completely through an outlet valve at the lowest point of the tank. The suction pipe used for water intake must be placed at an adequate height from the bottom of the tank. The drinking water tank must be separated by a dry tank from tanks where liquid substances dangerous to health are stored. Drinking water pipes shall not be led

through the tanks mentioned above and any other pipe systems shall not be led through the drinking water tank.

The pipes of the drinking water system may not be in contact with any other pipe system and they shall be clearly marked. Ingress of sea water into drinking water must be prevented.

### **Section 8**

#### **Filler pipes and sounding pipes and isolation of the drinking water tank**

The drinking water tank filler pipe and sounding pipe equipped with a plug shall be at the minimum height of 300 millimetres from the tank cover. At least two air pipes equipped with a mosquito net must lead to the tank.

Tanks situated on an open deck must be isolated from solar radiation. When necessary, the tanks must be isolated from the heat produced by the ship's machinery.

### **Section 9**

#### **Filling the drinking water tank**

Water to drinking water tanks shall be taken only from the public water system or some other place where the quality of water meets the requirements for drinking water and is regularly monitored, unless a special situation otherwise requires.

### **Section 10**

#### **Measures in a special situation**

If water must be taken in a port where the quality of water presumably does not meet the quality requirements of the Health Protection Act or where intestinal infections or other infectious diseases that spread through drinking water may occur or have been found, water must be disinfected or boiled before it is used as drinking water.

### **Section 11**

#### **Preparing drinking water from sea water**

If drinking water must be prepared from sea water, the water must be taken from open sea adequately far from contaminated water areas. Drinking water prepared from sea water must have a pH value of 6.5 - 8.5.

The openings through which sea water is taken in must be situated in the fore part of the ship, adequately far from the sewer drain.

### **Section 12**

#### **Disinfection equipment**

Ships where drinking water is prepared from sea water at a temperature less than 100 degrees centigrade and ships that take in water to turn it into drinking water elsewhere than in the territory of a state in the European Economic Area or in North-America shall have equipment for disinfection of drinking water.

### **Section 13**

## **Disinfection**

Drinking water must be disinfected by chlorine or in some other way that has been proved effective.

### **Section 14**

#### **Replacing water of poor quality**

Drinking water of poor quality or contaminated drinking water shall be replaced with drinking water that meets quality standards in the first port where such water is available. In that case the drinking water tank with its pipes must be emptied completely, cleaned and disinfected.

### **Section 15**

#### **Monitoring the quality of drinking water on board a ship**

Drinking water shall be analysed at least once a year to ensure its good quality. In connection with the quality control of drinking water it must be investigated from where drinking water last has been taken, how it possibly has been handled after that and how the cleaning of the drinking water tanks has been arranged. This inspection must be recorded in the food diary referred to in section 4. In addition, significant information on any cases of illness probably caused by poor-quality drinking water or contaminated drinking water must be recorded in the ship's diary.

### **Section 16**

#### **Reporting the cases of illness caused by drinking water or foodstuffs**

The Health Protection Act and the Food Act lay down provisions on reporting the cases of illness caused by drinking water or foodstuffs.

The reports referred to in subsection 1 must be recorded in the ship's diary.

### **Section 17**

#### **Provisions on entry into force**

This Decree enters into force on 1 January 2013.

This Decree repeals the Decree on catering for seafarers on board a ship ([601/1985](#)).

Council Directive 2009/13/EY; EUOJ 124, 20.5.2009