

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

It has been observed that overloading is the primary cause of ship/boat accidents endangering lives of passengers and causing loss of cargo. To avoid possible mishap and loss of lives, strict vigilance is essential and Ships/Boats found to be overloaded need to be immediately grounded.

Overloading can be easily detected visually as the "Load Line" of any ship/boat is a mandatory marking on both sides of the vessel which depicts the draft of the vessel and the maximum permissible limit to which the ship/boat can be safely loaded which in turn ensures safety of vessel and load. Overloading a vessel can compromise its stability, making it susceptible to sinking or capsizing even without adverse weather conditions or submerged hazards. **Load lines** help to ensure that the vessel is not loaded beyond its safe limits, protecting both the vessel and the lives of passengers and crew members.

Excessive loading can put significant stress on the vessel's hull, causing it to flex or distort. This can lead to cracks, leaks, or even catastrophic hull failure. Adhering to load line helps to maintain the structural integrity of the vessel besides prolonging its lifespan and continued operation. A ship's centre of gravity should be maintained within safe limits to ensure proper stability in all conditions. **Load Lines** indicate the maximum permissible displacement, taking into account both the ship's design and the specific world region and corresponding seasonal weathers it is operating in. This helps to maintain the stability of the ship by ensuring it is not overlade, preventing it from heeling excessively or experiencing a loss of stability.

Load Lines also include information about the vessel's draft, which is the vertical distance between the waterline and the lowest point of the ship's hull. Knowing the draft is essential for safe navigation, as it determines the minimum depth of water the vessel requires to avoid grounding or striking underwater obstacles.

Preventing overloading of ships helps to reduce the risk of accidents, spills, or incidents resulting from instability or compromised structural integrity, which could have detrimental impacts on marine ecosystems and the environment.

In view of the above all vessel operators in the state of Assam must clearly indicate "Load Line" in their vessels by painting a two-inch broad solid white line, the width being from the "Load Line" upwards all around the hull without exception. Respective authorities mandated to permit operations of such vessels must ensure to put in place a mechanism to restrict movement of vessels overloading beyond "load lines" or not having "load line" markings. It must also be ensured that non-compliance attracts deterrent punitive measures.

Enforcement agencies may ensure compliance of "load line" conditions through visual inspection from the shore/boats even during voyage of the vessels under observation (through optical devices such as binoculars) and electronic inspection (through sensors sending signals to command and control locations on violation of "load line" conditions).

These measures are required to be urgently implemented by all concerned in the interest of safety of passengers and cargo in the Inland water transport operations in the state. AIWTRA thus stipulates that Director, Inland Water Transport in consultation with Government of Assam immediately draw up an action plan to ensure compliance of the observations above and arrange for wide publicity.



Chairperson
Assam IWT Regulatory Authority
Ulubari, Guwahati-7.

Memo No.RA/AIWT/4/2019/487-A

Date 16/5/2023

Copy to:

1. PS to Minister, Transport Department, Government of Assam Dispur, for information.
2. The Secretary, to the Government of Assam, Transport Department, Dispur Guwahati-6, for information.
3. The State Project Director, AIWTD Society, Ulubari, Guwahati-7, for information and necessary action.
4. The Director, IWT, Assam, Ulubari, Guwahati-7, for information and necessary action. He shall ensure wide publicity.
5. ALL DC's, for information.
6. ALL Superintendents of Police, for information.
7. All the Chief Executive Officer of Zilla Parishads, for information and necessary action.
8. The Principal Secretaries of all autonomous District Councils for information and necessary action.


Chairperson
Assam IWT Regulatory Authority
Ulubari, Guwahati-7.

