



**KUZEY**

Pandi Correspondents

**CIRCULAR NO: 5 /03.09.2018**

Dear Sir/Madam,

We would like to inform you about 8 new regulations added to already existing marine traffic rules for Turkish Strait passages announced recently by the Ministry regarding the passages from Istanbul and Canakkale Straits. The news has been released today (03.09.2018) by a local newspaper Hurriyet and we deem it necessary to inform you by reporting the contents of this news accordingly.

The most prominent regulation is about the vessels running aground at Straits. According to the recent regulation, it will be the Coastal Safety who will first intervene in the vessels which run aground at either Istanbul or Canakkale Strait waters. The vessels passing from Straits, will not be permitted to sail more than 100 meters close to the bridge legs/piers.

The reasons of bringing these new regulations are the increase of risks regarding Turkish Strait passages and for safety purposes, decided & found as a result of the studies performed and led by the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure. As per the news, the merchant vessels carrying naval ships onboard as cargo will also perform their Turkish Strait Passages in the status of naval ships from now on. Previously, the master's rescue plan was first being waited for the vessels running aground at Straits, and the master was given maximum 6 hours of waiting at Straits & max 48 hours of waiting at Marmara Sea. Now, this regulation has been renounced.

With the newly brought rule, in case of grounding incidents, The General Directorate of Coastal Safety will be the first to intervene in the incident and prepare an incident report by undertaking preliminary inspections with a qualified group consisting of a pilot, underwater surveyors and divers. The rescue/salvage operations to run-aground vessels will be directly given by the Harbor Master. **After rescue/salvage operation, the vessel will not be permitted to sail WITHOUT lift of Judicial & Administrative Measures, WITHOUT completion of administrative inquiries and WITHOUT payment or guarantee of the rescue/salvage expenses and the losses/damages given to the environment by the grounding incident.** The masters will have to submit a list of their vessels' technical and safety equipment to the Harbor Masters (in Istanbul & Canakkale) before 3.2 Km of distance remains to the Straits. The passenger and container vessels longer than 300 meters will inform at least 10 days before they enter the Straits. No random passages will be allowed.

Mr. Gurdeniz, the retired Rear Admiral speaks to a local newspaper named VATAN that they brought the rule on vessels passing from the Straits in the status of naval ships because of safety reasons. He gave the example of Osetya War in August 2008 between Russia and Georgia. The retired rear admiral stated in his speech that USA had intended to deliver military equipment by the vessels we call government ships, from Straits. Our government opposed to these vessels' Strait passage as these vessels would be considered as government vessels. We had stressed the fact that commercial ships would have to be considered as in the status of naval ships. Moreover, and broadly, we can say that those merchant ships carrying military equipment can only pass from Straits in the status of naval ships. Because these vessels serve to Government's Navy. In other words, they constitute of being lieutenant government.

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## ***“CANAKKALE IS IMPASSABLE”***

With a temporarily added article, the passages of large ships have been subject to some regulations because of the still ongoing construction of 1915 Canakkale Bridge. According to these regulation, the rules applies to ships of 250 meters and upwards, are now being revised to apply to tankers of 200 meters and upwards. These vessels will only be able to pass from the Strait in daylight. When tankers enter in the Strait; they will not be coming across with any other tanker of 150 meters /upwards or 200-300 meters of dry cargo vessels or passenger vessels at Nara & Kilitbahir returns.

Vessels' passing the front and slow vessel will be according to rules of marine traffic centre. The vessels will not be permitted to be get close to bridge legs/piers to be constructed at Canakkale Bridge or to Istanbul Bosphorus Bridge more than 100 meters.

With the additional regulation, the LPG tankers of 150 meters are now subject to Strait passage under pilot assistance, in daylight & with a tugboat assistance. The rule has been brought to force that LPG tankers in 150-200 meters to pass from Strait with assistance/accompany of a tugboat in towing capacity of minimum 60 tons and for the tankers of 200 meters, tugboats in min. 90 tons of towing capacity. The passage regulations of the vessels powered by Nuclear or carrying Nuclear waste will be performed one-way considering the tides and currents.

For your easy access, we hereby leave the link of the relevant local newspaper publishing the news, although it is in Turkish, we are always ready to assist further in case of any need in translation or interpretation;

Link to the news is available below;

<http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/amp/gundem/istanbul-bogazina-8-kural-bakanlik-dugmeye-basti-40944501>

Hope the above would be found of assistance.

Kind regards,  
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