

# Maritime safety: registration of persons sailing on board passenger ships

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In broad terms the Committee welcomes the proposal for a Council directive. It accepts the necessity for Community legislation which is binding on the port state as well as the flag state. It welcomes the fact that the proposed directive is based on IMO decisions as contained in the SOLAS Regulation. As to the substance of the directive, it is beyond question that the number of passengers on board should be counted and that masters should be obliged to ensure that they do not exceed the number laid down in the vessel's passenger certificate. The recording of the names and other details of passengers constitutes a new requirement. There can be no doubt that the requirement to record the names of all their passengers will create considerable administrative difficulties for these ferry companies operating intensively scheduled services on routes where a significant number of passengers buy a ticket on a "turn-up-and-go" basis at the time of embarkation. The Committee suggests that the Commission should give further consideration to such a possibility, perhaps adding a clause to the proposed directive which would permit Member States to sanction an alternative recording arrangement on a particular route where they would judge the requirement to record individual names to be impracticable. Essentially such an arrangement would have to be agreed by both (or all) the port states concerned, be fully compatible with the SOLAS criteria, take full cognizance of the SAR and weather forecasting facilities in the area and not result in any distortion of competition between one scheduled service and another.