

M2085

Posted on 19.01.2023 by Adam Parnell

Category: [Maritime](#)

Report Title Lack of familiarity with equipment puts the vessel in danger

Initial Report

Our reporter served on a >500 GT yacht as part of a newly assembled crew. They were employed to take the vessel out of the dry dock and sail to the delivery destination. During the passage, an off-duty officer went onto the bridge and noticed a crossing vessel on the starboard bow. The officer on watch was asked if they were going to take action. The officer responded, 'Yes, using the autopilot. The off-duty officer advised that the vessel was too close to use the autopilot and that the manoeuvre should be made using hand steering. The officer of the watch appeared to struggle to make the change over to engage hand steering and was quickly assisted by the off-duty officer to make the change over to hand steering and take avoiding action.

Comment

An officer must only take over a watch if they are fully aware of the functions of the bridge equipment. Familiarity with equipment, particularly that essential to safely control the ship, must be undertaken during initial familiarisation training.

If not sure, always ask for clarification. There is a lot to take in when being familiarised on joining, and some operations for the equipment can be complicated and quickly forgotten.

Key Issues

Capability: The OOW was unfamiliar with the steering controls and would be considered not competent in the use of this equipment.

Teamwork: Good teamwork relies on knowing the strengths and weaknesses of yourself and your team members. In this case, the duty officer had not requested any support, probably through fear of looking incompetent.

Culture: When assembling a new team, especially on a short-term contract where everything and everyone is new to the team, it is essential to develop a safety culture. This is best achieved through basic emergency exercises, confirming that the emergency systems work as expected. The master is responsible for ensuring that all officers and crew can respond to emergencies and support each

other.

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teamworkTeamwork



