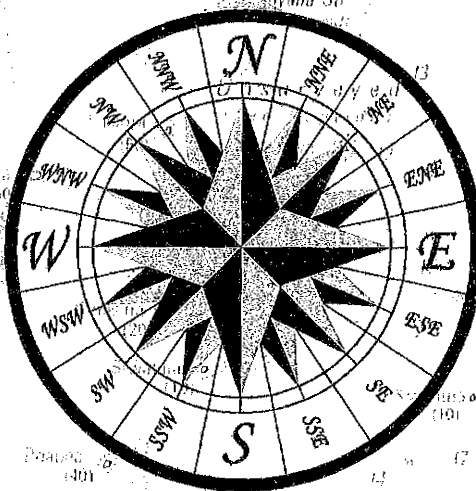
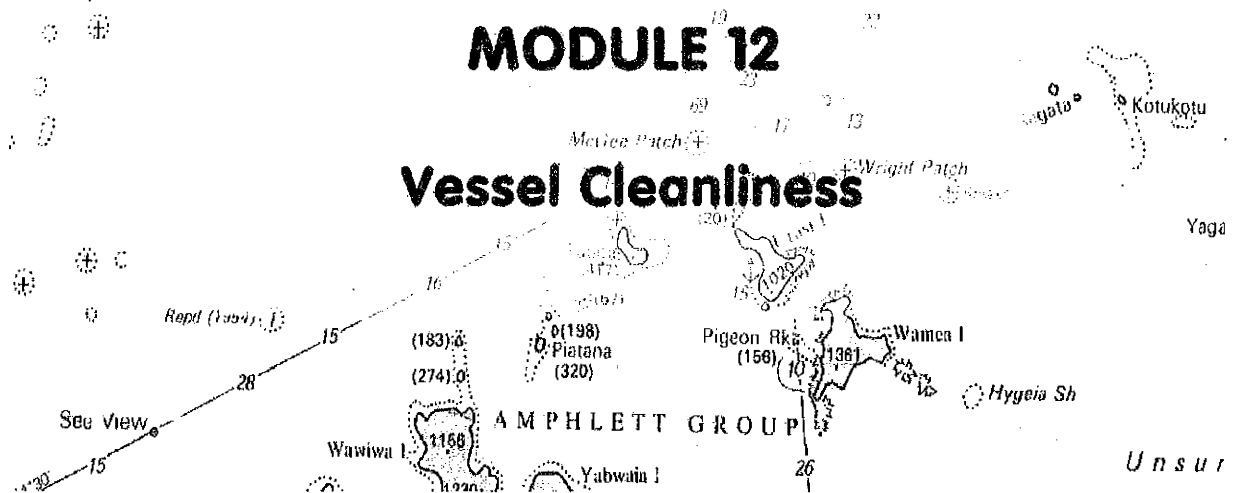


# Pacific Island Qualified Fishing Deckhand



## MODULE 12

### Vessel Cleanliness



Coastal Fisheries Program  
Training Section



South Pacific Commission

These resource materials were produced  
with financial assistance from the United  
Nations Development Project.

**undp**



Published by the American Medical Association, 535 North Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill.  
Subscription price, \$5.00 per annum in advance. Single copies, 15 cents.  
Entered as Second-Class Matter, May 2, 1917. Postpaid at special rate of \$3.75 per annum provided for by Act of October 3, 1917. Accepted for mailing at special rate of \$3.75 per annum provided for by Act of October 3, 1917. Postpaid at special rate of \$3.75 per annum provided for by Act of October 3, 1917.

Published by the American Medical Association, 535 North Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill.  
Subscription price, \$5.00 per annum in advance. Single copies, 15 cents.  
Entered as Second-Class Matter, May 2, 1917. Postpaid at special rate of \$3.75 per annum provided for by Act of October 3, 1917. Accepted for mailing at special rate of \$3.75 per annum provided for by Act of October 3, 1917.

Published by the American Medical Association, 535 North Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill.  
Subscription price, \$5.00 per annum in advance. Single copies, 15 cents.  
Entered as Second-Class Matter, May 2, 1917. Postpaid at special rate of \$3.75 per annum provided for by Act of October 3, 1917. Accepted for mailing at special rate of \$3.75 per annum provided for by Act of October 3, 1917.

Published by the American Medical Association, 535 North Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill.  
Subscription price, \$5.00 per annum in advance. Single copies, 15 cents.  
Entered as Second-Class Matter, May 2, 1917. Postpaid at special rate of \$3.75 per annum provided for by Act of October 3, 1917. Accepted for mailing at special rate of \$3.75 per annum provided for by Act of October 3, 1917.

Published by the American Medical Association, 535 North Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill.  
Subscription price, \$5.00 per annum in advance. Single copies, 15 cents.  
Entered as Second-Class Matter, May 2, 1917. Postpaid at special rate of \$3.75 per annum provided for by Act of October 3, 1917. Accepted for mailing at special rate of \$3.75 per annum provided for by Act of October 3, 1917.

Published by the American Medical Association, 535 North Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill.  
Subscription price, \$5.00 per annum in advance. Single copies, 15 cents.  
Entered as Second-Class Matter, May 2, 1917. Postpaid at special rate of \$3.75 per annum provided for by Act of October 3, 1917. Accepted for mailing at special rate of \$3.75 per annum provided for by Act of October 3, 1917.

## **MODULE 12:**

# **VESSEL CLEANLINESS**

---

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

- On completion of this module students will know the reasons for maintaining high standards of vessel cleanliness and personal hygiene and be familiar with required procedures and practices.
- 

### **CONTENT OUTLINE**

- The Importance of Vessel Cleanliness and Personal Hygiene
- Handling Food
- Clean Spaces
- Personal Hygiene
- Waste Disposal
- Working with Fish
- Cleaning Agents

# **The Importance of Vessel Cleanliness and Personal Hygiene**

- It has often been said in history that the way a vessel looks when it comes to port will always tell a story, that an obviously clean and well cared for vessel will always get the good cargo or have the most fish in its hold.
- This may not necessarily be true but there are a good number of reasons why it is important to keep vessels clean and for the crew aboard to take a pride in their own personal hygiene and in the way their vessel looks.
- In simple terms, its about ensuring that there are no problems on board with bacteria, infection, lice and vermin and contamination. In the confined spaces of vessels at sea, particularly in hot tropical climates, the risk of various types of contamination is high and poses a number of threats to the health of the crew and, if engaged in fishing, to the fish product carried aboard. Extreme cases could also affect the consumers of contaminated products.
- Most vessels require crew to share accommodation spaces and live in very close quarters. If one person comes down with a virus or flu, it is likely that others will also be exposed to the illness.
- In the Pacific region there is a vast variation in the standards of cleanliness and hygiene on fishing vessels. The overall maintenance of proper standards will be the responsibility of the vessels master and senior officers. However, it is the crew that generally perform the tasks relating to vessel cleanliness and hygiene. It is important that crew know what standards are appropriate and important to remember that there would be very few crew who have ever been told off or disciplined for cleaning!

## Handling Food

- The galley is one of the most important areas on all vessels. It will always be one of a vessel's busiest and most used spaces and on many vessels, the cook is second only to the skipper in his importance to the crew. A well fed crew will be likely to work better and be generally more healthy.
- The size, shape and condition of the galley area will vary greatly from vessel to vessel but they all have some things in common:
  - galley areas store food, produce meals and dispose of waste and easily become dirty with constant use
  - regular use of the galley area without attention to proper cleaning will result in a buildup of dirt and potential contaminants
- Larger vessels may have a trained cook on board to organise regular meals but smaller vessels often roster cooking duties between crew members. Smaller vessels may also have a very confined galley area with minimal equipment.
- Whatever the galley and cooking arrangements on board a vessel, there are a number of basic hygiene requirements which should be followed by crew involved in food production on board:
  - always wash hands with hot water and soap before handling food products for preparation or consumption
  - keep dry food storage areas clean and tidy and separate from other general storage areas
  - always ensure that food items are not left lying around as this will encourage insect and vermin pests
  - if possible, do not mix frozen or refrigerated food items with stored fish
  - always thoroughly wash food containers in hot soapy water after use
  - ensure that the general galley area is kept tidy and clean at all times by cleaning up food spillages when they happen
  - ensure that the galley area and cooking items are thoroughly cleaned at the end of each trip

## Clean Spaces

- A fishing vessel is home to its crew when the vessel is at sea. On some vessels, this can mean periods of 3 - 4 months at a time. Despite possible crowding and difficult living conditions, it is important that the crew treat the vessel with the same respect they do their home. This is particularly important in relation to overall hygiene and tidiness.
- On some vessels, there may be shortages of fresh water and minimal arrangements for washing and toilet facilities. Whatever the arrangements of a vessel, the task facing the crew is to make the best of facilities available. Once again, crew can be guided by a number of general rules or guidelines:
  - ensure personal bedding is kept clean and regularly aired out
  - keep used and dirty clothing separate from clean clothing and establish a routine for washing dirty clothes (even if this is limited to salt water washing)
  - keep personal gear well stored and organised
  - ensure the vessel has a routine for regular cleaning of toilet, shower and general washing facilities
  - ensure the vessel has a routine for regular cleaning of sleeping and general accommodation facilities
  - do not wear dirty or smelly clothes or boots in the vessels accommodation area
  - never sleep in dirty work clothes
  - take every opportunity to ventilate accommodation areas
- It is common practice on most vessels for all crew on the homeward leg of a voyage to give the vessel a thorough clean and scrub. This practice should be encouraged.

## Personal Hygiene

- Fishing can be dirty and smelly work and there is nothing worse at sea than sharing a cabin or sleeping space with somebody who does not wash regularly. Poor personal hygiene can result in the spread of infections and sickness which will hamper crew performance and can affect the overall operation of the vessel.
- It is expected that crew should have their own personal hygiene standards based on ensuring they wash themselves and their work clothes regularly. These standards also include the washing of bedding and care of any cuts or scratches incurred during daily work.
- If there is limited supplies of fresh water, it may be that personal washing and clothes cleaning can only be undertaken in salt water. This is better than no washing at all.
- A well organised deckhand will prepare a personal washing kit for use at sea. This kit should contain tooth brush and tooth paste, soap, shampoo, washing powder, towels and any other personal items such as deodorant, body oil and possibly basic first aid items (although this item should be available on the vessel).
- Some vessels may not be equipped with proper toilets and crew will be expected to relieve themselves over the vessel railing. Whatever the facilities available, crew should always wash their hands after relieving themselves and should never defecate or urinate on the vessels deck.

## Waste Disposal

- Details on waste disposal in the context of marine pollution are covered in Module 18. In the context of vessel hygiene, it is important that general rubbish is stored in sealed containers in designated areas and is not allowed to accumulate in deck areas. Disposal of rubbish will depend on the type of rubbish and the disposal facilities of the vessel. The practice of dumping all wastes at sea is discouraged by international convention but the specific practices of any vessel will be determined by the vessel captain. In order to minimise the risk of infection and vermin, it is important that rubbish disposal is well organised and that rubbish containers are thoroughly scrubbed after use.

## Working with Fish

- Hygiene is particularly important on vessels which process fish or fish products. This includes longline vessels which head and gut fish prior to chilling or freezing. Fish handling is dealt with in detail in Module 19 but there are some very basic rules which are important to remember in relation to hygiene.
- On most longline vessels, fish processing is carried out in a designated deck area. In order to ensure that fish product remains in good condition and that there is minimal risk of general contamination, the following general rules should be applied:
  - always ensure handling area is clean and organised before commencing processing
  - always ensure fish waste and blood is quickly disposed of and kept separate from fish trunks during processing
  - use plenty of (sea) water to wash processing area and fish product
  - ensure processing area and processing equipment is thoroughly scrubbed and cleaned when processing operation is completed for the day
  - never reuse ice remaining at the end of a fishing trip
  - always scrub out fish holds thoroughly when unloading of catch is completed.



## Cleaning Agents

- There are a wide range of chemicals and cleaning agents available for purchase. Vessel owners and operators are likely to supply vessels with both general and specialised cleaning agents. It is important that an adequate supply of cleaning agents is maintained on vessels at all times.
- The general requirements for a vessel will include:
  - **general purpose detergent:** for use in galley and in washing out spaces and scrubbing bulkheads etc
  - **disinfectant:** for use with hot water to clean bathroom handling areas
  - **chlorine based cleaner:** for use in association with disinfectant for scrubbing out fish hold spaces and bathroom/toilet areas
  - **degreasing agent:** for cleaning around machinery areas or anywhere where there is a heavy build up of greasy dirt
  - **washing detergent:** for washing clothes
  - **soap and shampoo:** for personal use (may not be supplied by vessel)

# TEACHING NOTES

## DELIVERY TIME

- 2 - 4 hours

## TEACHING MATERIALS

- Whiteboard or Blackboard
- OHP

## LESSON PLANNING

- It should be possible to teach this module in 1 or 2 lessons with a total duration of 2 - 4 hours. The duration of the lessons will depend on what practical exercises and assessment are included.
- The purpose of the module is to ensure that students are fully aware of the importance of personal hygiene and vessel cleaning responsibilities and the tasks of a deckhand in relation to general vessel hygiene.

## POINTS TO NOTE AND TEACHING HINTS

- This module can be delivered as a student exercise. Tutors can commence the lesson with a general discussion about the importance of personal hygiene and cite examples of situations where poor hygiene has resulted in sickness or infection.
- The lesson can be conducted by asking students a series of questions and then guiding discussions to list the correct answers on the whiteboard.
- Questions which can be asked include:
  - what is personal hygiene?
  - why is personal hygiene important?

- what steps should be taken to ensure proper handling of food products?
  - why should vessel spaces be kept clean?
  - what cleaning routines should be undertaken on vessels at sea?
  - why is hygiene important when handling fish?
- The answers to these questions should enable the students to list standard hygiene practices. This module can be used to make the students think for themselves, rather than listen to the tutor talk. Let the students do the work of making the checklists. They will be more likely to remember a list prepared by the group than a list written on the board by the tutor.
  - It is important to emphasise that deckhands need to play an active role in vessel cleaning and that this role is a part of their daily work.
  - The importance of personal hygiene and vessel cleanliness will vary from vessel to vessel. An acceptable standard on one vessel may be totally inappropriate for another. Deckhands should be encouraged to adopt a personal standard which will meet the demands of a high standard employer.

## **PRACTICAL EXERCISES**

- Apart from the classroom exercises designed to have the group prepare checklists for deckhands as outlined above, the use of additional practical exercises for this module will depend on the available time.
- If time permits and the training venue is accessible to a harbour or port, a group visit to observe the overall condition of fishing vessels in port may be useful.
- A simple vessel tour to observe crew facilities for cleaning would be useful to give an idea of the conditions students will work under. If possible, visit both large and well equipped vessels and smaller vessels with less equipment and facilities.

