

## Recent Change to the Navigational Rules

There have been several changes to the Navigational Rules (72 COLREGS) that should be communicated to public boating courses and membership course students that reference Navigational Rules. The primary area impacting recreational boaters is Rule 33(a) which discusses the carrying requirements for sound producing devices on vessels 12 meters or longer. The amended rule no longer requires a vessel between 12 and 20 meters to carry a bell.

The following was copied from the Coast Guard web site:  
(<http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/mwv/navrules/navrules2003.htm>).

**RULE 33(a)** is amended to read as follows:

(a) A vessel of 12 meters or more in length shall be provided with a whistle, **a vessel of 20 meters or more in length shall be provided with a bell in addition to a whistle**, and a vessel of 100 meters or more in length shall, in addition, be provided with a gong, the tone and sound of which cannot be confused with that of the bell. The whistle, bell, and gong shall comply with the specifications in Annex III to these Regulations. The bell or gong or both may be replaced by other equipment having the same respective sound characteristics, provided that manual sounding of the required signals shall always be possible.

*Please note that the bell is no longer required on a vessel 12 meters or more but less than 20 meters in length.*

**RULE 35(i)** is added as follows, and the old **Rule 35(i)** and **(j)** are renumbered as **35(j)** and **(k)**, respectively:

**(i) A vessel of 12 meters or more but less than 20 meters in length shall not be obliged to give the bell signals prescribed in paragraphs (g) and (h) of this Rule. However, if she does not, she shall make some other efficient sound signal at intervals of not more than 2 minutes.**