OPNAV INSTRUCTION 9096.1B

From: Chief of Naval Operations

Subj: WEIGHT AND STABILITY LIMITS FOR NAVAL SURFACE SHIPS

1. Purpose. To issue policy regarding weight and stability limits of naval ships, service life growth allowances for new ship designs, and for control of weight and moment in commissioned ships. This revision contains organizational and nomenclature updates and should be reviewed in its entirety.

2. Cancellation. OPNAVINST 9096.1A.

3. Applicability. The provisions of this instruction are applicable to the staff of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (OPNAV); Commander, Naval Sea Systems Command (COMNAVSEASYSCOM); Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet (COMPACTFLT); and Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command (USFLTFORCOM).

4. Policy. Navy’s ships will be kept within their naval architectural limits to ensure that essential survivability features are maintained. Service life growth allowances for weight and vertical center of gravity above bottom of keel will be established and incorporated in the operational requirements documents for naval vessels. These features provide sufficient stability, buoyancy, and hull girder strength to withstand hazards such as underwater damage, beam winds, and heavy seas. Inadequate service life growth allowances for weight and vertical center of gravity above bottom of keel have resulted in expensive corrective ship changes, or in the inability to modernize ships through the installation of new weapons systems. It is important that the fundamental survivability features be included in the design of Navy ships and maintained throughout their lives.

   a. Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (OPNAV) Platform Resource Sponsors, Director, Expeditionary Warfare (OPNAV N95); Director, Surface Warfare (OPNAV N96); Director, Undersea Warfare (OPNAV N97); and Director, Air Warfare (OPNAV N98)) will:

      (1) ensure that funding is provided for:

          (a) weight and moment compensations or other actions required to adhere to established limits; and

          (b) required inclining.
(2) submit for review and approval by the Chief of Naval Operations, any ship characteristics change or other major planned deviations from the approved service life growth allowance; and

(3) submit for review and approval by the Chief of Naval Operations, any alteration which will cause a ship to exceed naval architectural weight and stability limits. These alterations must be reviewed and recommended by COMNAVSEASYSCOM.

b. Fleet Commanders will:

(1) maintain awareness of ship vertical center of gravity and stability limitations at deployment; and

(2) take appropriate action to control unplanned weight growth (i.e., personal effects, stores).

c. COMNAVSEASYSCOM will:

(1) establish naval architectural limits for each ship class;

(2) establish service life growth allowances for weight and height of center of gravity to be included in new ship designs and ships in service life extension programs for approval by CNO;

(3) for each ship class, keep track of the weight and stability status, limiting draft and other limitations including:

(a) maintenance of ship configuration records;

(b) performance of all necessary inclinings and surveys to establish current ship condition; and

(c) identification of weight and moment compensation necessary to adhere to the established limits.

(4) provide to fleet commanders:

(a) information necessary for maintaining their ships within established limits, and the implication of not doing so; and

(b) submit naval message annually concerning the stability status of in-service surface ships weight and stability status.
5. **Records Management**

   a. Records created as a result of this instruction, regardless of format or media, must be maintained and dispositioned per the records disposition schedules located on the Department of the Navy/Assistant for Administration, Directives and Records Management Division portal page at [https://portal.secnav.navy.mil/orgs/DUSNM/DONAA/DRM/Records-and-Information-Management/Approved%20Record%20Schedules/Forms/AllItems.aspx](https://portal.secnav.navy.mil/orgs/DUSNM/DONAA/DRM/Records-and-Information-Management/Approved%20Record%20Schedules/Forms/AllItems.aspx).

   b. For questions concerning the management of records related to this instruction or the records disposition schedules, please contact the local records manager or the Department of the Navy/Assistant for Administration, Directives and Records Management Division program office.

6. **Review and Effective Date.** Per OPNAVINST 5215.17A, Director, Surface Warfare (OPNAV N96) will review this instruction annually around the anniversary of its issuance date to ensure applicability, currency, and consistency with Federal, Department of Defense, Secretary of the Navy, and Navy policy and statutory authority using OPNAV 5215/40 Review of Instruction. This instruction will be in effect for 10 years, unless revised or cancelled in the interim, and will be reissued by the 10-year anniversary date if it is still required, unless it meets one of the exceptions in OPNAVINST 5215.17A, paragraph 9. Otherwise, if the instruction is no longer required, it will be processed for cancellation as soon as the need for cancellation is known following the guidance in OPNAV Manual 5215.1 of May 2016.

<signature>

E. H. BLACK III  
Director, Surface Warfare

Releasability and distribution:  
This instruction is cleared for public release and is available electronically only via Department of the Navy Issuances Web site, [https://www.secnav.navy.mil/doni/default.aspx](https://www.secnav.navy.mil/doni/default.aspx)