

**WORKSAFE SERVICES DIVISION
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY
LEGISLATIVE INTERPRETATIONS**



Topic	Stairways – Dimensions & design	Issued by: V.P., WorkSafe Services
Statute	<i>Regulation 91-191</i>	Date Issued: April 12, 1999
Section	115	Date Revised:

115(1) An employer shall ensure that a stairway

- a) is of sufficient strength to sustain a live load of 4.8 kPa,
- b) is a minimum of 1.12 m in width,
- c) is pitched not less than 20 degrees and not more than 35 degrees from the horizontal,
- d) has risers constant in height that are not less than 127 mm and not more than 200 mm,
- e) has a maximum height of 3.7 m between landings,
- f) has landings, if any, with a minimum clearance of 1.12 m measured in the direction of the run,
- g) has a vertical clearance of 2.05 m from the top of the tread at all points in the stairway,
- h) has treads constant in width and not less than 225 mm in width, and
- i) has a non-slip nosing or a strip of non-slip material not less than 50 mm in width and installed

Question

On New Brunswick ferries the stairway widths, the depths of the stairs and the height of the risers are all smaller than those dimensions set out in section 115, but they are in compliance with Coast Guard Standards. Do the stairways have to meet the requirements of 91-191 or of Coast Guard Vessel specifications?

Response

The provisions of section 115 are more appropriate for buildings and are not intended to address a waterborne vessel. The design and dimensions of the ferry stairways are in conformance with Coast Guard specifications for stairways, which is the more appropriate standard for vessels.

Employees should be advised to descend such stairways by facing into the stairs using three-point contact as they would with a ladder.