PANAMA
MARITIME AUTHORITY

Merchant Marine Circular

Panama Maritime Authority
General Directorate of Merchant Marine
Control and Compliance Department

MERCHANT MARINE CIRCULAR MMC-126

To: Master, Ship-owners, Operators, Company Security Officers, Ship Security Officer, Legal Representatives of Panama Flagged Vessels, Recognized Security Organizations (RSO) of Panama Flagged Vessel.

Subject: Ship Security Officer (SSO).

Reference: Law No. 38 June 4th, 1995 UNCLOS 1982.
Resolution ADM No. 140-2003 of may 15th, 2003.
MMC-125 SHIP SECURITY PLAN (SSP).
MMC-123 INTERNATIONAL SHIP AND PORT FACILITY SECURITY CODE (ISPS CODE).
MMC-128 Security Levels and Declaration of Security (DoS).

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1. The purpose of this Merchant Marine Circular is to update the responsibilities of the Ship Security officer (SSO) as a person designated by the Company Security Officer (CSO) who is responsible for the security of the ship, including implementation and maintenance of the ship security plan and for liaison with the Company Security Officer (CSO), Port Facility Security Officer and this Administration.

2. According to Part A, Section 12 and Part B, Section 13 the SSO shall have the knowledge of, and receive formal training in the elements of Part B, Section 13.1, and specific Company training in the elements of Part B, Section 13.2, of the Code.

3. All Panamanian flagged vessels engaged in international voyages in which the ISPS Code applies, must have on board a Ship Security Officer (SSO) shall be a management level officer. It is highly recommended to give this duty to the Master, Chief Officer, Chief Engineer or Second Engineer, who shall have completed an approved training course regarding the requirements and recommendations of the ISPS Code. If the person designated is not the Master, it must be understood that the Master still holds overall responsibility for the security of the ship which cannot be relinquished.

4. All the Ship Security Officer (SSO) of Panamanian flagged vessels are hereby requested to maintain wide communication with the Company Security Officer (CSO) in order to comply with the measures established in the Ship Security Plan.

5. This Administration urges all Panamanian flagged vessels transiting high-risk areas or operating in ports where piracy attacks occur to carry out a security assessment as a preparation for development of measures to prevent attacks of pirates or armed robbers and on how to react should an attack occurs MSC.1/1334 (For reference visit Maritime Security Link, IMO Documents).

For further assistance, please note below the contact points.

December, 2020 *– Change of PMA phone numbers.*
June, 2019 *– Including in paragraph # 5 reference to MSC.1/1334 through Maritime Security Link, IMO Documents).*
June, 2013 *- Changes all throughout the text*
September, 2003

Inquiries concerning the subject of this Merchant Marine Circular or any other request should be directed to:

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