

# Merchant Marine Circular

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

## MERCHANT MARINE CIRCULAR MMC-391

**To:** Ship-owners/operators, Legal Representatives of Panamanian Flagged Vessels, Panamanian Merchant Marine Consulates and Recognized Organizations (ROs) and all other stakeholders.

**Subject:** Multiple Load Line Certificate Operational Procedure.

**References:**

- a) Law No. 20 dated October 23, 1975 adopting International Convention on Load Lines, 1966.
- b) Law No. 29 dated July 11, 2007 adopting the International Convention on Load Lines Protocol of 1988.
- c) Resolution No. 107-OMI-223-DGMM dated December 11, 2019, Amendments to the introduction and Part A of the Intact Stability Code, 2008 (2008 IS Code) – adopting the following resolutions: MSC.413(97) dated November 25, 2016, MSC.414(97) dated November 25, 2016, MSC.443(99) dated May 24, 2018 and MSC.444(99) dated May 24, 2018.

---

1. This Merchant Marine Circular replaces “Multiple Load Line” policy described in the Merchant Marine Circular No. **MMC-91**.

2. **Purpose**

2.1 The purpose of this Merchant Marine Circular is to provide the operational procedure to be followed to change Load Line Certificates on Panamanian registered vessels when Multiple Load Line Assignment.

3. **Background**

3.1 Multiple Load Line Certificates are used when, for a period of time, the vessel has to operate with different freeboard assignments due to reduced deadweight (DWT).



# Merchant Marine Circular

**3.2** Recognized Organizations duly authorized may proceed to issue an additional Load Line Certificates after the Freeboard Assignment (Multiple Load Line Assignments).

## **4. Definitions**

**4.1** Refer to Annex I – Chapter I - Regulation 3 for the definitions of terms used in the Annexes to the International Convention on Load Lines, 1966, as amended by the Protocol of 1988.

## **5. Multiple Load Line Operational Procedure**

**5.1** Recognized Organizations are authorized to issue multiple Load Line Certificates when stability information for the relevant statutory loading conditions corresponding to each load line mark, is approved, and verified appropriately. Therefore, the correspondent certificates are placed on board.

**5.2** Company and ship's masters shall ensure that the following documents are placed onboard on ships assigned with multiple load lines assignments:

**5.2.1** Safety Management System (SMS) is revised and updated accordingly for Multiple Load Line assignment, considering at least the following points:

**5.2.1.1** One (1) Load Line Certificate is in use at any given time.

**5.2.1.2** Additional Load Line Certificate(s) is/are kept in a separated file and kept under the safe custody of the Master.

**5.2.1.3** Official entry shall be made in the log book for change in Load Line marking.

**5.2.1.4** GT and NT will remain unaltered as well as the deepest draft condition.

**5.2.1.5** Other statutory certificates, different than the additional International Load Line Certificate, shall include only the maximum deadweight corresponding to the vessel's assigned freeboard.

**5.2.2** Freeboard Calculation,

**5.2.3** Record of Conditions of Assignment of Load Lines,

**5.2.4** Stability information and loading/ballasting information also related to ship strength to avoid the creation of any unacceptable stresses in the ship's structure.



# Merchant Marine Circular

**5.3** For any change of the Load Line Certificate also the following steps shall be followed on board by the Company and the Recognized Organization:

**5.3.1** For each change of Load Line marks corresponding to the assigned freeboard shall be permanently marked on the sides of the ship and Load Line marks corresponding to the additional International Load Line Certificate shall be cut or engraved on the ship's sides.

**5.3.2** One (1) set of marks associated with each Load Line Certificate in use, (i.e., is actually "painted in" and visible at any given time). Other Load line marks are eliminated or painted out with the same color as its background.

**5.3.3** The details of marking and the verification of marks shall be verified by an attending surveyor according to LLC 66/88–Annex I, Chapter I, Reg.8 and 9. However, if a surveyor is not available, the change may be made by the ships' personnel under the supervision of the master who is responsible for the accuracy. Where such action is taken by the master, he shall coordinate with the Recognized Organization and notify to the Administration. Arrangements for verification at the next port should be agreed with the recognized organization, and in case of any discrepancy the Administration shall be notified immediately.

**5.3.4** The statutory certificates where the Deadweight <sup>(\*)</sup> of the ship in metric tons is applicable, the Recognized Organization shall revise it as appropriate in case that multiple set of certificates are issued at owner's request.

*(\*) For oil tankers, chemical tankers and gas carriers only.*

**5.4** Company and ship's master are responsible for the compliance of all requirements of the LLC 66/88, as applicable, all remaining provisions of the LLC 66/88 shall be complied with, a copy of the latest edition of the LLC 66/88 shall be maintained on board at all times.

**5.5** The verification of the aforementioned steps is a shared responsibility between the Owners and Recognized Organizations.

**5.6** This Administration reserves the right to request at any time objective evidence on the verification and fulfillment of all steps indicated above.



# Merchant Marine Circular

## 6. As additional information, the more common detainable deficiencies onboard related to Multiple Load Line Certificates

6.1 This Administration highly recommends the observance of the following deficiencies by the Company and masters, with the purpose to avoid possible detentions.

- 6.1.1 Both Load Line Certificates kept in the same folder.
- 6.1.2 Painted Load Line marks on both ship's side do not correspond to the Load Line Certificate.
- 6.1.3 Load Line marks on starboard-side do not correspond to the Load Line marks on port-side.
- 6.1.4 No entry is made in official ship's log book for the change in Load Lines.
- 6.1.5 Second Load Line Certificate is not stamped for annual survey endorsements.
- 6.1.6 Wrong Load Line Certificate is displayed in the accommodation.
- 6.1.7 Lack of familiarization of ship's crew with multiple Load Line Certificates.
- 6.1.8 Safety Management System (SMS) on board not updated.

**May, 2024** – Points 5.3.4 amended.

**May, 2021** – New.

---

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

SEGUMAR-Panama  
General Directorate of Merchant Marine  
Panama Maritime Authority

Phone: (507) 501-5353 /50 /48

E-mail: [internationaloffices@segumar.com](mailto:internationaloffices@segumar.com), [segumar.headoffice@segumar.com](mailto:segumar.headoffice@segumar.com)

Website: <https://panamashipregistry.com/circulars/>