

Merchant Marine Circular

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

MERCHANT MARINE CIRCULAR MMC-195

- To:** Ship-owners/Operators, Company Security Officers, Legal Representatives of Panamanian Flagged Vessels, Panamanian Merchant Marine Consulates and Recognized Organizations (RO).
- Subject:** Long Range Identification and Tracking of ships (LRIT)
- Reference:** Law No. 7 of October 27, 1977.
Law 57 of August 6, 2008.
Resolution MSC.202(81) of May 19, 2006 adopted by Resolution No. 106-OMI-06-DGMM of November 26, 2007.
Resolution MSC.263(84) adopted on 16 May 2008 MSC.1/Circ.1295 of December 8, 2008.
Resolution No. 106-048-DGMM dated August 19, 2019
Resolution J.D. No. 063-2022 of November 17, 2022.
Resolution No. 106-077-DGMM of August 9, 2023.
MSC.1/Circ.1307/Rev.1 of November 28, 2022.
MMC-155 – Automatic identification System (AIS).

This Merchant Marine Circular supersedes **MMC-197**, **MMC-249** and **MMC-400**.

1. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this Merchant Marine Circular is providing a revised instructions on implementing, maintenance and compliance with the requirements to the Long-Range Identification and Tracking of ships (LRIT) on board the Panamanian flagged vessels, as required by Regulation 19-1 of Chapter V of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, as amended (SOLAS).

2. SCOPE:

This Merchant Marine Circular applies to all Panamanian flagged vessels engaged on international voyages upward 300 GRT and described in paragraph 4.1.

3. BACKGROUND:

The Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) adopted Resolution MSC.202(81) on May 19, 2006 amending Chapter V of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea 1974 (SOLAS) Regulation V/19-1



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introducing mandatory position reporting obligations, called Long-Range Identification and Tracking system for ships (LRIT).

- The amendment came into force on January 1, 2008, with compliance required by December 31, 2008.
- The LRIT system is a satellite-based system that tracks ships in real-time.
- The LRIT information ships are required to transmit include: the ship's identity, location and date/time of the position at 6-hour intervals.
- All Panamanian flagged vessels under SOLAS V/19-1 regulation must comply with LRIT requirements.

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4.1 Applicability :

SOLAS V/19-1 applies to the following types of Panamanian flagged vessels, engaged on international voyages:

1. All passenger ships, including High Speed passenger craft,
2. Cargo ships, including High Speed craft of **300** gross tonnage and above,
3. Mobile Offshore Drilling Units (MODU) that are propelled by mechanical means.
4. Offshore Support Vessels, Special Purpose Ships and Mobile Offshore Units (MOU) of 300 gross tonnage and above that are propelled by mechanical means.

4.1.1 Panamanian-flagged fishing vessels and/or those engaged in fishing-related activities that are fitted with Long-Range Identification and Tracking (LRIT) equipment must carry out the Conformance Test Report and report through the LRIT system.



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4.2 Compliance Dates:

4.2.1 In accordance with SOLAS Chapter V, Regulation 19.1, and IMO Circular MSC.1/Circ.1307, all ships, whether constructed before or after 31 December 2008, are required to comply with the Long-Range Identification and Tracking (LRIT) system when the vessel is placed into service.

4.2.2 Panamanian flagged vessels must comply with LRIT regulations and be fitted with a terminal that is capable to transmit automatically the information specified in the paragraph 4.3.1.

4.2.3 Regardless of the construction date, vessels fitted with an automatic identification system (AIS), as defined in SOLAS V/19.2.4, and operated exclusively within sea area A1, as defined in SOLAS IV/2.1.12, **are not** required to comply with the provisions of SOLAS V/19-1.

4.3 Shipborne LRIT Equipment Testing:

4.3.1 Shipborne LRIT equipment must be capable of being configured to transmit the following minimum information automatically, at reporting intervals every 6 hours, to the LRIT Data Center designated by the Flag Administration:

- The identity of the ship (IMO Number and Name),
- The position of the ship (Latitude and Longitude), and
- The date and time of the position reported.

4.3.2 Shipowners may use any equipment to transmit LRIT information provided that the onboard equipment complies with the requirements of SOLAS Regulations V/19-1.6, V/19-1.7 and IMO MSC.1/Circ. 1307/Rev.1.

4.3.3 The Panama Maritime Authority (AMP), by Resolution No. 106-38-DGMM issued on September 9, 2008, adopts Circular MSC.1/Circ.1257 of June 5, 2008, amended by Circular MSC.1/Circ.1307/Rev.1 of November 28, 2022 as the relevant standard (Guidance on the Survey and Certification of Compliance of Ships with the Requirement to Transmit LRIT Information).

4.3.4 This Administrations reminds all the Shipowners may operate LRIT shipborne equipment using a recognized Communication Service Providers (CSP) by the International Mobile Satellite Organization (IMSO).

4.3.5 Vessels registered under the Panama flag and equipped with LRIT-compliant Inmarsat-C equipment shall ensure that both the Long-Range Identification and Tracking (LRIT) system and the Automatic Identification System (AIS) are maintained in continuous and proper operation. All reasonable measures shall be taken to prevent any



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interruption in the transmission of the vessel's identity and position, in accordance with Resolution No. 106-048-DGMM dated August 19, 2019.

4.3.6 Shipborne equipment used for LRIT shall, after passing a Conformance Test conducted by the authorized ASP, be considered as an approved type in accordance with SOLAS V/19-1, MSC.263(84) of 16 May 2008 and MSC.1/Circ.1296 of December 8, 2008. There will be a charge by the testing ASP directly to ship owners for the Conformance Test and LRIT Conformance Certificate.

4.4 Panama LRIT National Data Centre (NDC):

4.4.1 The Panama Maritime Authority has established a fully functional National Data Centre which is operated on its behalf by Polestar (www.polestarglobal.com) who is also authorized as the Panama Recognized Application Service Provider (Recognized ASP) to undertake shipborne equipment testing and the issuance of a Conformance Test Report (CTR).

POLESTAR GLOBAL

3rd Floor, the Studio Building, 21 Evesham St.,
London W11 4AJ, United Kingdom
Support center: +44 20 7313 7402
Email: support@polestarglobal.com

For information on how to request a Conformance Test and/or a Conformance Test Report, please refer to the following link: <https://ondemand.polestarglobal.com>

4.4.2 All applicable Panamanian-flagged vessels shall be integrated into the Panama LRIT Data Centre and shall be subject to a satisfactory conformance test of the shipborne LRIT equipment, as well as the issuance of the Conformance Test Report (CTR).

4.5 LRIT Conformance Test Result:

4.5.1 The Administration requires all owners and operators to ensure that, upon a vessel's registration under the Panama flag, the LRIT conformance test is completed prior to the radio survey.

4.5.2 The LRIT conformance test is designed to demonstrate that the shipborne terminal complies with the functional requirements set out in **SOLAS regulation V/19-1** and shall be conducted directly by Polestar Global (Consortia Maritime Intelligence Group 2022), acting as the Recognized Application Service Provider (ASP) on behalf of the Panama Maritime Authority.

4.5.3 An LRIT conformance test may take approximately 48 hours and is conducted remotely, preferably while the vessel is at sea. It is recommended that transceivers be



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tested well in advance of radio surveys to ensure sufficient time is available for proper completion of the test.

4.5.4 On successful completion of the LRIT test, the owner/operator must **immediately request the issuance of the Conformance Test Report (CTR)**, as proof of compliance, through the following link <https://ondemand.polestarglobal.com>

4.6 LRIT Conformance Test Report (CTR):

4.6.1 The CTR refers to the “Conformance Test Report” and shall not be confused with the conformance test results. Recognized Organizations (ROs) shall not issue an interim or full-term Cargo Ship Safety Equipment Certificate based on the conformance test results; therefore, they shall proceed in accordance with **section 4.12.3**.

4.6.2 The CTR serves as proof of compliance with LRIT regulations and is required for radio surveys and inspections. The ship owner/operator shall ensure that a valid CTR is maintained on board at all times in accordance with **section 4.7.1 and 4.7.2**.

4.7 Conformance Test validity and amendments:

4.7.1 Starting July 1st, 2023, all Conformance Test Reports (CTR) issued on behalf of the Republic of Panama will be issued as **electronic documents with electronic signature and QR Code**.

The Panama Maritime Authority will not accept conformance tests carried out under another registry.

4.7.2 Starting January 1, 2024, all Conformance Test Report will be issued with a validity period not exceeding twelve (12) months.

4.7.3 In cases where a vessel changes its name, ownership, Maritime Mobile Service Identity (MMSI), call sign (distinctive number or letters), gross tonnage, or the sea areas for which it is certified to operate, a new Conformance Test shall not be required. However, an amended Conformance Test Report (CTR) must be obtained, subject to the applicable fee.

4.7.4 In such cases, the owner/operator shall submit a request for an amendment of the **Conformance Test Report (CTR)** to the authorized ASP at the following email address: support@polestarglobal.com.

4.7.5 For the **Annual Conformance Test**, the following scenarios apply:

1. Vessels that have completed the conformance test before December 2018, must complete the test before the end of September 2023.
2. Vessels that have completed the conformance test between January 1, 2019 and



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December 31, 2021, must complete the test before the end of November 2023.

3. Vessels that have completed the conformance test after January 1, 2022, must complete the test before December 31, 2023.

4.7.6 For information on how to request a Conformance Test and/or a Conformance Test Report, please refer to <https://ondemand.polestarglobal.com>

4.8 Amendments in the shipborne equipment:

4.8.1 The shipborne equipment shall be required to undergo a new Conformance Test and obtain a new Conformance Test Report in the following cases:

1. All new installations or any changes to LRIT shipborne equipment;
2. All existing LRIT equipment at the time of a change of flag;
3. If the onboard LRIT equipment ceases to operate;
4. When the recognized ASP has notified the Administration that the onboard equipment is not operating within the parameters of the Conformance Test Report and/or in accordance with LRIT performance standards;
5. If the vessel has changed flag or has been re-registered under the Panamanian Registry;
6. If the vessel wishes to operate outside the maritime area indicated in the conformance test report;

4.9 Change of Flag:

4.9.1 To ensure compliance with the provisions of SOLAS Regulation V/19-1, the vessel's LRIT equipment shall be properly integrated into the Panama National Data Center (NDC). Accordingly, upon a change of flag, the shipowner/operator shall arrange for the LRIT conformance test to be conducted and shall ensure that a valid Conformance Test Report (CTR), issued by an authorized provider, is maintained on board at all times prior to the radio survey.

4.9.2 The new Recognized Mobile Satellite Service Vessel Ground Station Number issued by the Panama Administration after the change of flag must be provided to the Testing ASP so that the ASP may issue a new Conformance Test Report on behalf of the Panama Maritime Authority.

4.9.3 In the event that the vessel does not have LRIT equipment or capability, owners/operators may apply for an authorization letter through the E-Segumar platform (<https://certificates.amp.gob.pa/certificates/>) to obtain the necessary time for the installation, configuration, and/or scheduling of the LRIT test.



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4.10 Switched off LRIT equipment:

4.10.1 This Administration reminds all owners and operators that switching off the LRIT (Long Range Identification and Tracking) equipment requires prior authorization from the vessel's Flag Administration and is only permitted under specific circumstances. If the equipment is switched off, the vessel's Master shall inform this Administration without delay at the following email address: monitoringfleet@amp.gob.pa.

4.10.2 A vessel may only switch off its Long-Range Identification and Tracking (LRIT) equipment under certain circumstances and with prior authorization from its Flag Administration.

1. vessel is in dry dock for repairs, modifications or conversions,
2. vessel is moored for a period exceeding 7 days,
3. vessel in laid-up condition,
4. vessel is operating in jurisdictional waters
5. any other will be evaluated.

4.10.3 The LRIT equipment must stay switched on before entering and while traveling through high-risk areas. The onboard LRIT system and SSAS must be properly set up and fully working to comply with the Best Management Practices (BMP) and the Internationally Recommended Transit Corridor (IRTC), as stated in Merchant Marine Circular (MMC) No. 230.

4.10.4 According to Resolution No. 106-048-DGMM dated August 19, 2019 all Panamanian flagged vessels that deliberately deactivate the Long-Range Identification and Tracking Equipment (LRIT) and the Automatic Identification System (AIS) will be sanctioned for noncompliance with the Panama Maritime Authority Regulations.

4.11 Authorization Conformance Test:

4.11.1 Starting from April 10th, 2025, all users will be able to apply through the E-Segumar platform for the authorization letter related to conformance test report (CTR) at the following link: <https://certificates.amp.gob.pa/certificates/>

4.11.2 These authorizations are free of charge. They will be processed through the main office in Panama.

- LRIT Process for New Constructions
- LRIT Process for Change of Flag
- Vessels Operating in Jurisdictional Waters
- LRIT Reporting for Laid-Up Vessels
- Postponement of LRIT Conformance Test Report (Applicable only to ships with an issued CTR).



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4.11.3 Starting May 1, 2025, all users will be able to apply for an authorization letter related to LRIT or AIS malfunctions through the E-Segumar platform at the following link: <https://certificates.amp.gob.pa/certificates/>. The authorization letter will be valid until for 30 days.

- LRIT Malfunction
- AIS Malfunction
- LRIT Equipment Replacement

4.11.4 In cases where the malfunction request exceeds 30 days, it shall be submitted directly to Conditionals@segumar.com for further processing.

4.12 Survey and Certification - Instructions to the Recognized Organizations (RO):

4.12.1 Effective 1 June 2026, all Recognized Organizations (ROs) shall verify, during Safety Radio Surveys, that a valid and up-to-date Conformance Test Report (CTR) is available on board, in accordance with **sections 4.7.1 and 4.7.2. Failure to comply with this requirement shall be considered poor practice.**

4.12.2 The verification of the Conformance Test Report (CTR) is therefore a mandatory element of the Safety Radio Survey and must be duly reviewed and properly documented during the inspection process and shall not be confused with the conformance test results.

4.12.3 Recognized Organizations (ROs) shall not issue an interim or full-term Cargo Ship Safety Equipment Certificate based on the conformance test results; therefore, they shall proceed in accordance with **section 4.12.4.**

4.12.4 If a vessel undergoing a radio survey does not have the Conformance Test Report (CTR) available and valid on board, but there is evidence that the test has been initiated by a Recognized Application Service Provider (ASP), the Recognized Organization (RO) may issue a conditional certificate valid for a period of one **(1)** month.

- a) For vessels of 500 GRT and above, a Conditional Cargo Ship Safety Certificate may be issued.
- b) For vessels of less than 500 GRT, a Conditional Safety Certificate may be issued.

4.12.5 The conditional certificate may be issued without prior authorization from the Segumar Office; however, a copy shall be submitted immediately to conditionals@segumar.com.

4.12.6 Shipowners intending to install a dedicated LRIT terminal on board shall ensure that such installation is carried out well in advance of the vessel's first Safety Radio Survey, so as to guarantee that the Conformance Test Report (CTR) is issued and available on board prior to the radio survey.



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4.13 Exemptions and Equivalent arrangements:

4.13.1 Panamanian vessels that are operating exclusively in a GMDSS A1 Sea area and are fitted with an Automatic Identification System (AIS) as defined in SOLAS Chapter V, Regulation 19.2.4, and operated exclusively within sea area A1 (as defined in revised SOLAS Chapter IV, Regulation 2.1.15), are not required to comply with the provisions of SOLAS Chapter V, Regulation 19-1. Therefore, exemption certification from the requirement to comply with SOLAS Chapter V, Regulation 19-1 is not required.

4.13.2 In those cases where the vessel maintains a CTR to operate at A2+A3 and for some reason the vessel is operating in domestic waters for a certain period of time, it must inform the Administration to conformancetest@amp.gob.pa and apply for authorization to stop reporting by LRIT equipment.

4.13.3 In case of the vessel are not normally engaged in international voyages but are required to undertake a single international voyage, or which are re-positioning from a GMDSS sea area A1, should apply to the Administration exemptions@segumar.com for consideration of exemption or equivalence in accordance with the provisions of SOLAS regulations I/4, IV/3.1, IV/3.2 and V/3.

4.13.4 Any application for exemption or equivalence should include details of the proposed voyage including dates, length of voyage, port/place of departure and port/location of destination.

4.13.5 Panamanian vessels applying for exemptions should note that, in accordance with MSC.1/Circ. 1295 Guidance for certain ship types which are required to transmit LRIT info on exemptions, equivalents and certain operational matters, there may be a requirement for the Company to submit the voyage plan (and any amendments) and/or to report at specified intervals to not only the government(s) of the State(s) where the vessel is proceeding but also, the government(s) of the coastal State(s) in whose waters the vessel might be navigating, subject to those countries being entitled to the information in accordance with the requirements of SOLAS V/19-1.

4.13.6 Applications for permanent exemptions for offshore units operating in a fixed location, such as FPSOs, are to be made direct to the PMA exemptions@segumar.com. The exemption request should state the position of the unit (latitude/longitude) and the period of time that the unit will remain at the specified location. Where no period of time is stated, the exemption will be valid until the expiry date of the radio related certificate.

4.14 Non-compliance:

4.14.1 It is mandatory, that the Long-Range Identification and Tracking Equipment (LRIT) and the Automatic Identification System (AIS) maintain a permanent and adequate operation, avoiding by all possible means that they stop transmitting information on the identity and position of the vessel.



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4.14.2 According to Resolution No. 106-048-DGMM dated August 19, 2019, all Panamanian flagged vessels that deliberately deactivate the Long-Range Identification and Tracking Equipment (LRIT) and the Automatic Identification System (AIS) will be sanctioned for noncompliance with the Panama Maritime Authority Regulations.

4.14.3 Panamanian-flagged vessels engaged in fishing, fishing-related activities that are not reporting their positions through the Automatic Identification System (AIS) and/or the Long-Range Identification and Tracking System (LRIT) equipment will be sanctioned and/or cancelled from the Panamanian registry in accordance with the provisions of the Resolution No. 106-077-DGMM dated August 9, 2023.

April, 2026 - Paragraphs 4.4.1, 4.6.1, 4.6.2, 4.11.4, 4.12 were modified.

September, 2025 – Paragraph 4.2.1, 4.4.1, 4.12.2 and 4.13.3 were modified.

May, 2025 - Restructuring of the entire circular.

May, 2024 – Scratch out in numeral 16.4 item was removed.

April, 2024 – March, 2024 paragraph details was modified, being the correct form: Paragraph 15.2 updated, removing in case of change of owner, item. Paragraph 15.8 updated, including the item for change of owner and adding the reference of the cost for amended certificate.

March, 2024 – Paragraph 14.2 updated, removing in case of change of owner, item. Paragraph 14.8 updated, including the item for change of owner and adding the reference of the cost for amended certificate.

May, 2023 - References were updated, entire revised, new paragraphs 13, 14 and 15 included. The annual conformance test included issuance of Electronic Certificate (QR introduced).

November, 2020 - New paragraph 3, 7, 8, 10 / Update ASP name and contact details.

May 2017 – Update ASP and NDC name, physical address and contact details

July, 2014 – Update of email address

April, 2012 – Update of email address

August, 2009 – Addition of two CSP and changes in contact information

December, 2008.

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

Maritime Ships Security Department
Control and Monitoring Section
General Directorate of Merchant Marine
Panama Maritime Authority

Phone : (507) 501-5016

E-mail : conformancetest@amp.gob.pa,

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