

Merchant Marine Circular

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

MERCHANT MARINE CIRCULAR MMC-407

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

Subject: Welcome Guidance and Post Registration Requirements.

Reference: Law No. 57 of August 6th, 2008 - General of Merchant Marine.
Decree Law No. 7 of February 10, 1998.

1. Purpose:

- 1.1. The purpose of this Merchant Marine Circular is to provide guidance to users of Panama Ship Registry regarding the requirements applicable to vessels after their registration under the Panama Ship Registry.
- 1.2. It also aims to keep stakeholders informed of the various instruments adopted by the Republic of Panama concerning the registration of merchant marine vessels and other related matters. Additionally, it provides information on the applicable statutory certificates and those whose issuance has been delegated to Recognized Organizations by the Panama Maritime Authority for this purpose.

2. Scope:

- 2.1. In accordance with the provisions of item 25 of Article 30 of Decree Law No. 7 of February 10, 1998, as amended by Article 187 of Law No. 57 of August 6, 2008, one of the functions of the General Directorate of Merchant Marine is to perform Flag State functions and enforce applicable regulations on vessels flying the Panamanian flag and foreign-registered vessels operating within jurisdictional waters.
- 2.2. Such enforcement shall be carried out in accordance with national legal standards and the international conventions ratified by the Republic of Panama, particularly in matters related to maritime safety, navigational safety, maritime security, and the prevention and control of marine pollution, as well as relevant international guidelines and codes applicable to the Flag State.



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2.3. The Republic of Panama has adopted several International Maritime Conventions through different national laws with the aim of preserving the safety of life at sea, preventing pollution, and ensuring the security of vessels registered under the Panamanian flag.

3. Statutory Certificates required before the vessel sails under the Panamanian flag:

3.1. The statutory certificates and related procedures are divided into three categories: **certificates issued directly by the Administration, immediate reporting to the Administration, and certificates issued by the RO/Class Society.**

3.2. Once the vessel is registered under the Panamanian flag, the following statutory certificates may be required and must be requested from the Administration or issued by the authorized Recognized Organization, as applicable.

4. Certificates that must be requested directly from the Administration:

4.1. **CSR** – Apply to vessels engaged on international voyages, passenger ships, including high-speed passenger craft; cargo ships, including high-speed craft, of 500 gross tonnage and upwards; Mobile offshore drilling units; Port facilities serving such ships engaged on international voyages. Please refer to [MMC-183](#) for further information. In case of any query on this topic, don't hesitate to contact csr@amp.gob.pa and/or the nearest SEGUMAR Office (refer [MMN-018/2021](#)).

4.2. **WRC** – Apply to vessels of 300 GRT and above. Please refer to [MMC-202](#) for further information. In case of any query on this topic, don't hesitate to contact liabilities@segumar.com and/or the nearest SEGUMAR Office (refer [MMN-018/2021](#)).

4.3. **BCC** – Apply to vessels of 1000 GRT and above. Please refer to [MMC-202](#) for further information. In case of any query on this topic, don't hesitate to contact liabilities@segumar.com and/or the nearest SEGUMAR Office (refer [MMN-018/2021](#)).

4.4. **CLC** – Apply to vessels (Oil Tankers) of 2,000 deadweight tons and above. Please refer to [MMC-241](#) for further information. In case of any query on this topic, don't hesitate to contact liabilities@segumar.com and/or the nearest SEGUMAR Office (refer [MMN-018/2021](#)).

4.5. **PAL** – Apply to all passenger ships. Please refer to [MMC-290](#) for further information. In case of any query on this topic, don't hesitate to contact liabilities@segumar.com and/or the nearest SEGUMAR Office (refer [MMN-018/2021](#)).

4.6. **MSM** – Apply to vessels of 200 GRT and above. Please refer to [MMC-285](#) for further information. In case of any query on this topic, don't hesitate to contact msm@segumar.com and/or the nearest SEGUMAR Office (refer [MMN-018/2021](#)).



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- 4.7. ISSC** – Applies to all Panamanian flagged ships engaged on international voyage of 500 gross tonnages and upwards. Please refer to [MMC-359](#) for further information. In case of any query on this topic, don't hesitate to contact issc@amp.gob.pa and/or the nearest SEGUMAR Office (refer [MMN-018/2021](#)).
- 4.8. CTR** – Applies to vessels engaged on international voyages: all passenger ships including high speed craft; cargo ships, including high speed craft of 300 gross tonnages and above; and Mobile offshore drilling units. Please refer to [MMC-195](#) for further information. In case of any query on this topic, don't hesitate to contact conformancetest@amp.gob.pa.
- 4.9. BWMP** – Applies to vessels of 400 GRT (except vessels, floating platforms, FSUs, and FPSOs at the location and Art. 3.2a & 3.2f BWM convention). Please refer to [MMC-345](#) for further information. In case of any query on this topic, don't hesitate to contact bwmp@segumar.com and/or the nearest SEGUMAR Office (refer [MMN-018/2021](#)).
- 4.10. IBWMC** – Applies to vessels of 400 GRT and above (except vessels with ballast tank sealed, floating platforms, FSUs, and FPSOs at the location of operation and Art. 3.2a & 3.2f BWM convention). Please refer to [MMC-345](#) for further information. In case of any query on this topic, don't hesitate to contact ibwmc@segumar.com and/or the nearest SEGUMAR Office (refer [MMN-018/2021](#)).
- 4.11. ICIHM (Hong Kong Convention)** – Applies to vessels of 500 GRT and above. Please refer to [MMC-386](#) for further information. In case of any query on this topic, don't hesitate to contact srr-ihm@segumar.com and/or the nearest SEGUMAR Office (refer [MMN-018/2021](#)).
- 4.12. ITC/NTC** – Applies to vessels over 24m of length or 100 GRT and above. Please refer to [MMC-67](#) for further information. In case of any query on this topic, don't hesitate to contact itc@segumar.com and/or the nearest SEGUMAR Office (refer [MMN-018/2021](#)).
- 4.13. MARPOL VI / IMO DCS AND CII** – Apply to vessels of 5000 GRT and above. Please refer to [MMC-365](#) for further information. In case of any query on this topic, don't hesitate to contact imo-dcs@segumar.com and/or the nearest SEGUMAR Office (refer [MMN-018/2021](#)).
- 4.14. Other certificates issued by the Administration if the vessels are subject to some especial conditions allowed by the international instruments and the national legislation are:**
1. Exemption Certificates.
 2. Equivalence Certificates.



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4.15. In addition, this Administration has established a series of letters that might be issued in different scenarios and circumstances, such as Authorization, Concurrence, Dispensation, Statement, and Acknowledgement letters for different purposes.

5. Immediate reporting to the Administration:

5.1. ISM DECLARATIONS – Applies to vessels of 500 GRT and above. Please refer to [MMC-176](#) for further information. In case of any query on this topic, don't hesitate to contact fullterm@segumar.com and/or the nearest SEGUMAR Office (refer [MMN-018/2021](#)).

5.2. CSO – Applies to all Panamanian flagged ships engaged on international voyage of 500 gross tonnages and upwards. Please refer to [MMC-123](#) for further information. In case of any query on this topic, don't hesitate to contact isps@amp.gob.pa and/or the nearest SEGUMAR Office (refer [MMN-018/2021](#)).

5.3. MLC financial securities (DMLC) – Applies to all vessels with personal consider Seafarer (according to STCW Code). Please refer to [MMC-269](#) for further information. In case of any query on this topic, don't hesitate to contact mlc@segumar.com and/or the nearest SEGUMAR Office (refer [MMN-018/2021](#)).

5.4. SSP – Applies all Panamanian flagged ships engaged on international voyage of 500 gross tonnages and upwards. Please refer to [MMC-346](#) for further information. In case of any query on this topic, don't hesitate to contact isps@amp.gob.pa

6. Issuing Certificates by Recognized Organizations (ROs)

6.1. Certificates not issued by the Flag State, users of the Panama Ship Registry are free to contact any of the Recognized Organizations approved by this Administration, listed in Merchant Marine Circular [MMC-136](#). These ROs provide essential services related to survey, inspection, and audit processes, as well as the issuance of statutory certificates. By selecting the name of each RO, users will find more detailed information about the certificates they are authorized to issue.

6.2. Inquiries regarding Recognized Organizations should be directed to ro-monitoring@segumar.com or by telephone (+507) 501-5351.

7. The following mandatory international instruments have been adopted by the Republic of Panama:

7.1. LL 1966, adopted through Law No. 20 of October 23, 1975.

7.2. TONNAGE 1969, adopted through Law No. 6 of October 27, 1977.

7.3. SOLAS 1974, adopted through Law No. 7 of October 27, 1977.

7.4. COLREG 1972, adopted through Law No. 7 of November 9, 1978.



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- 7.5. SOLAS PROT 1978, adopted through Law No. 12 of November 9, 1981.
- 7.6. MARPOL 1973/1978, adopted through Law No. 17 of November 9, 1981 and Law No. 1 of October 25, 1983.
- 7.7. STCW 1978, adopted through Law No. 4 of May 15, 1992.
- 7.8. CLC PROT 1992, adopted through Law No. 96 of December 15, 1998.
- 7.9. MARPOL PROT 1997, adopted through Law No. 30 of March 26, 2003.
- 7.10. LL PROT 1988, adopted through Law No. 29 of July 11, 2007.
- 7.11. SOLAS PROT 1988, adopted through Law No. 31 of July 11, 2007.
- 7.12. AFS 2001, adopted through Law No. 30 of July 11, 2007.
- 7.13. MLC, 2006, adopted through Law No.2 of January 6, 2009.
- 7.14. BUNKERS 2001, adopted through Law No. 7 of January 14, 2009.
- 7.15. PAL PROT 2002, adopted through Law No. 96 of November 7, 2013.
- 7.16. NAIROBI WRC 2007, adopted through Law No. 26 of May 4, 2015
- 7.17. HONG KONG Convention, adopted through Law No. 28 of July 1, 2016.
- 7.18. BWM 2004, adopted through Law No. 41 of September 12, 2016.

For further information on this matter, please contact: cumplimentodgmm@amp.gob.pa.

8. List of Mandatory Instruments (Codes and Amendments) derived from International Conventions adopted by the Republic of Panama applicable to vessels:

- 8.1. International Management Code for the Safe Operation of Ships and for Pollution Prevention (ISM Code), adopted through Resolution No. 106-OMI-15-DGMM of December 13, 2007.
- 8.2. Code of Safety for Ships Carrying Industrial Personnel (IP Code), adopted through Resolution No. 107-OMI-288-DGMM of March 11, 2024.
- 8.3. International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code (IMDG Code), adopted through Resolution No.106-OMI-13-DGMM of December 13, 2007.
- 8.4. International Code for the Construction and Equipment of Ships Carrying Dangerous Chemicals in Bulk (IBC Code), adopted through Resolution No. 106-OMI-16-DGMM of December 13, 2007.
- 8.5. Code for the Construction and Equipment of Ships Carrying Dangerous Chemicals in Bulk (BCH Code), adopted through Resolution No. 106-OMI-17-DGMM of December 13, 2007.
- 8.6. International Code for the Construction and Equipment of Ships Carrying Liquefied Gases in Bulk (IGC Code), adopted through Resolution No. 106-OMI-18-DGMM of December 13, 2007.



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- 8.7.** Code for the Construction and Equipment of Ships Carrying Liquefied Gases in Bulk (GC Code), adopted through Resolution No. 106-OMI-49-DGMM of March 19, 2008.
- 8.8.** International Code for the Safe Carriage of Packaged Irradiated Nuclear Fuel, Plutonium and High-level Radioactive Wastes on Board Ships (INF Code), adopted through Resolution No. 106-OMI-19-DGMM of December 13, 2007.
- 8.9.** International Code for the Safe Carriage of Grain in Bulk, and the Code of Practice for the Safe Loading and Unloading of Bulk Carriers, adopted through Resolution No. 106-OMI-23-DGMM of December 26, 2007.
- 8.10.** Code of Safety for Ship Using Gases or Other Low-flashpoint Fuels (IGF Code), adopted through Resolution No. 106-OMI-183-DGMM of December 12, 2016.
- 8.11.** Code of Safe Practice for Cargo Stowage and Securing. (CSS Code), adopted through Resolution No. 106-OMI-27-DGMM of December 26, 2007.
- 8.12.** International Maritime Solid Bulk Cargoes Code (IMSBC Code 2008), adopted through Resolution No. 106-OMI-75-DGMM of June 28, 2010.
- 8.13.** International Code of Safety for High-Speed Craft (HSC Code 1994), adopted through Resolution No. 106-OMI-14-DGMM of December 13, 2007.
- 8.14.** International Code of Safety for High-Speed Craft (HSC Code 2000), adopted through Resolution No. 106-OMI-14-DGMM of December 13, 2007.
- 8.15.** International Life-Saving Appliance Code (LSA Code), adopted through Resolution No. 106-OMI-20-DGMM of December 26, 2007.
- 8.16.** Casualty Investigation Code 2008, adopted through Resolution No. 106-OMI-164-DGMM of December 24, 2015.
- 8.17.** Intact Stability Code. (IS Code 2008), adopted through Resolution No. 106-OMI-75-DGMM of June 28, 2010.
- 8.18.** International Code for Application of Fire Test Procedures (FTP Code), adopted through Resolution No. 106-OMI-21-DGMM of December 26, 2007.
- 8.19.** International Code for Application of Fire Test Procedures (2010 FTP Code), adopted through Resolution No. 106-OMI-101-DGMM of June 25, 2012.
- 8.20.** Code for Fire Safety Systems (FSS Code), adopted through Resolution No. 106-OMI-22-DGMM of December 26, 2007.



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- 8.21. Technical Code on Control of Emissions of Nitrogen Oxides from Marine Diesel Engines (NOx Technical Code), adopted through Resolution No. 106-OMI-37-DGMM of December 26, 2007.
- 8.22. International Ship and Port Facility Security Code (ISPS Code 2005), adopted through Resolution No. 106-OMI-55-DGMM of October 28, 2008.
- 8.23. Code for Recognized Organizations (RO Code), adopted through Resolution No. 106-OMI-136-DGMM of October 29, 2014.
- 8.24. International Code for Ships Operating in Polar Waters (Polar Code), adopted through Resolution No. 106-OMI-181-DGMM of October 25, 2016.
- 8.25. Code on Noise Levels on Board Ships (NOISE Code), adopted through Resolution No. 106-OMI-129-DGMM of August 12, 2014.
- 8.26. Amendments to Regulations II-1/3-2 and XII/6 of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), 1974, related to the Performance Standard for Protective Coatings for Dedicated Seawater Ballast Tanks in all types of ships and double side skin spaces of bulk carriers (Resolution MSC.215(82)), adopted through Resolution No. 106-OMI-51-DGMM of March 19, 2008.
- 8.27. Amendments to the Performance Standard for Protective Coatings for Cargo Oil Tanks of Crude Oil Tankers (Resolution MSC.288(87)), adopted through Resolution No. 106-OMI-133-DGMM of August 12, 2014.
- 8.28. Amendments to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), 1974, as amended (Resolution MSC.402(96) and MSC.404(96)), adopted through Resolution No. 107-OMI-209-DGMM of July 18, 2019.

9. List of non-mandatory codes adopted by the Republic of Panama:

- 9.1. Further to the list of mandatory instruments, there are other international instruments considered as not internationally mandatory; however, they have been adopted by the Republic of Panama and are therefore considered as national legislation applicable to vessels under our registry:
 - 9.1.1 Code for the Construction and Equipment of Mobile Offshore Drilling Units, 1979 (1979 MODU CODE) and amendments adopted through Resolution No. 614-438-ALCN of December 13, 1983.
 - 9.1.2 Code for the Construction and Equipment of Mobile Offshore Drilling Units, 1989 (1989 MODU CODE) and amendment adopted through Resolution No. 603-04-223-ALCN of August 12, 1992.



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- 9.1.3 Code for the construction and equipment of mobile offshore drilling units, 2009 (2009 MODU Code) and amendments. Adopted through Resolution No. 106-OMI-102-DGMM of June 27, 2012
- 9.1.4 Code for the Transport and Handling of Hazardous and Noxious Liquid Substances in Bulk on Offshore Support Vessels (OSV Chemical Code), adopted through Resolution No. 107-OMI-201-DGMM of October 10, 2018.
- 9.1.5 Code of Safety for Special Purpose Ships, 1983 (SPS Code 1983), and amendments (Resolution A.534(13)), adopted through Resolution No. 106-OMI-148-DGMM of March 13, 2015.
- 9.1.6 Code of Safety for Special Purpose Ships, 2008 (SPS Code 2008), and amendments (Resolution MSC.266(84)), adopted through Resolution No. 106-OMI-126-DGMM of April 1, 2014.

10. Requirements applicable for the registration under the Panamanian flag of vessels engaged in fishing, cabotage and domestic service with a gross tonnage below 300 and/or 500 gross tons:

10.1. Vessels engaged in fishing, cabotage and domestic service activities with a gross tonnage below three hundred (300) and/or five hundred (500) gross tons, applying for registration under the Panamanian flag, shall comply with the registration, inspection, safety and certification requirements established by the Panama Maritime Authority, through the General Directorate of Merchant Marine. Applicable legal framework:

10.1.1. Law No. 57 of August 6, 2008, General Merchant Marine Law of the Republic of Panama, particularly Articles 1, 2, 3, 4 and 49.

10.1.2. Resolutions No. 106-137-DGMM and No. 106-138-DGMM of September 10, 2013, regarding inspection, construction, equipment and operation requirements for vessels under five hundred (500) gross tons.

10.1.3. Law No. 44 of November 23, 2006, which creates the Aquatic Resources Authority of Panama (ARAP), applicable to vessels engaged in fishing activities.

Payment Accounts:

Information related to payment accounts is available in our [MMN-15/2022](#)

<https://www.panamashipregistry.com/document/payment-accounts/>



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May, 2026 – Editorial adjustments to paragraphs 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, the title of paragraph 7, and paragraph 7.9. Paragraph 8 updated to incorporate the 2010 FTP Code. Paragraph 9 amended to incorporate the Code of Safety for Special Purpose Ships, 1983 (SPS Code 1983) and Code of Safety for Special Purpose Ships, 2008 (SPS Code 2008) into the list of non-mandatory instruments. Consequential renumbering, including new paragraphs 8.19, 8.26, 8.27 and 8.28.

March, 2026 – New.

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

General Directorate of Merchant Marine
Panama Maritime Authority

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