Merchant Marine Circular

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

MERCHANT MARINE CIRCULAR MMC-136

To: Ship-owners/Operators, Legal Representatives of Panamanian Flagged Vessels, Panamanian Merchant Marine Consulates and Recognized Organizations (RO's).

Subject: Recognized Organizations authorized by the Republic of Panama.

Reference:
Decree Law No. 7 of February 10, 1998.
Law No. 57 of August 6, 2008.
Law No. 41 of September 12th, 2016.
Executive Decree No. 337, of December 22, 2022.
Resolution MSC.350(92) dated June 21, 2013, (Adopted through Resolution 106-OMI-135-DGMM dated October 24, 2019).
Resolution MEPC.238(65) dated May 17, 2013, (Adopted through Resolution 106-OMI-136-DGMM dated October 24, 2019).
Resolution MSC.356(92) dated June 21, 2013, (Adopted through Resolution 106-OMI-137-DGMM dated October 24, 2019).
Resolutions MSC.349(92) and MEPC.237(65).
Resolution MEPC.265(68) dated May 15, 2015, (Adopted through Resolution 106-OMI-180-DGMM, of October 25, 2016.
Resolution MSC.386(94) dated November 21, 2014, (Adopted through Resolution 106-OMI-181-DGMM, of October 25, 2016.
Resolution ADM No. 014-2021 of February 17, 2021
Resolution J.D. No. 004-2024 dated March 21, 2024.
Resolution No. 106-011-DGMM of August 21, 2009.
Resolution No. 106-025-DGMM, of May 4, 2012.
Resolution No. 106-38-DGMM of April 25th, 2014, modified by Resolution No. 106-47-DGMM of June 26th, 2014.
Resolution No. 106-146-DGMM of December 14th, 2020.
Resolution No. 106-023-DGMM, of March 30, 2022.

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1. This Merchant Marine Circular replaces:

MMC-15 / **MMC-36** / **MMC-131** / **MMC-348** / **MMC-255** / **MMC-341** and **MMC-284.**

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this circular is to inform all our stakeholders about the Recognized Organizations (RO) and Recognized Security Organizations (RSO) authorized to perform Statutory Certification and Services on behalf of the Republic of Panama for ships registered under Panama flag.

3. SCOPE

3.1. The General Directorate of Merchant Marine, based on the provisions of Law No. 57 dated August 6, 2008, Article 128 is able to delegate to other entities, its faculty to verify and certify Panamanian flagged vessels, according to maritime regulations adopted by this Administration, so that such entities can conduct inspections and issue certificates on behalf of the Republic of Panama, in order to verify that our fleet is fulfilling compliance in terms of safety, security and prevention of maritime pollution.

3.2. Furthermore, through National Resolutions No. 106-OMI-135-DGMM, 106-OMI-136-DGMM, and 106-OMI-137-DGMM, all of them of October 29, 2014, the General Directorate of Merchant Marine adopted the IMO Resolutions MEPC.238(65), MSC.350(92) and MSC.356(92), through which the Recognized Organization Code became mandatory.

3.3. Moreover, through the National Resolution ADM No. 014-2021 of February 17, 2021, this Administration implemented Resolution A.1070(28) IMO Instruments Implementation Code (III Code) – Delegation of Authority, paragraph 18.

3.4. Lastly, through the National Resolution No. 106-023-DGMM of March 30, 2022; the General Directorate of Merchant Marine adopted the regulation to rule, control, and monitor Recognized Organizations and Recognized Security Organizations authorized by the Republic of Panama and those seeking approval as Recognized Organization.

3.5. The aforementioned legislations are the legal basis through which this Administration administers and regulates the delegation of authority for statutory certification and services in accordance with the applicable requirements of the international mandatory instruments.

4. DEFINITIONS

4.1. Recognized Organization (RO): Organization that has been assessed by the flag State, and found to comply with Part 2 of the RO Code.

4.2. Recognized Security Organization (RSO): Organization authorized by the Administration to evaluate Ship Security Plans and carry out verifications and issue Interim International Ship Security Certificate, subject to the provisions of the ISPS Code.

4.3. Authorization: Delegation of authority granted to a Recognized Organization to perform statutory certification and services on behalf of a flag State, which could be Full, Partial or Limited.

4.4. Active: Recognized Organization having valid authorization to perform statutory certification and services on behalf of a flag State.

4.5. Suspended: Recognized Organization having a temporary suspension of the authorization to perform statutory certification and services on behalf and under the conditions of the flag State,

4.6. Canceled: Recognized Organization whose authorization has been permanently revoke to perform statutory certification and services on behalf of a flag State.

4.7. Full Authorization: Authorization to perform inspections, surveys, audits, plan reviews, approvals, and issue/revoke necessary interim and full-term certificates. This type of authorization shall be permanently authorized through a resolution issued by the flag State and included in the official agreement.

4.8. Partial Authorization: Authorization to perform inspections, surveys, audits, plan reviews, approvals, and issue/revoke interim certificates; however, the definitive review/approval and/or Full-Term Certificate is issued by the Administration. This type of authorization shall be permanently authorized through a resolution issued by the flag State and included in the official agreement.

4.9. Limited Authorization: Temporary authorization to perform a specific inspection, survey, audit, plan review, approval, and issue interim and/or full-term certificate for a specific ship(s) in cases where the Recognized Organization is not authorized Full or Partial. This authorization will be evaluated and approved through a formal letter, on a case-by-case basis.

5. APPLICABILITY

5.1. Recognized Organizations shall be in compliance with the RO Code requirements, to perform statutory certification and services under mandatory IMO instruments and national legislation, on behalf of the Republic of Panama.

5.2. All requirements of the RO Code are generics and applicable to all Recognized Organizations, regardless of their type and size and the statutory certification and services provided.

5.3. It is noteworthy that Recognized Organizations do not need to provide all types of statutory certification and services and may have a limited scope of delegation, provided that the requirements of the RO Code are applied in a manner that is compatible with the limited scope of delegation.

6. IMPLEMENTATION

6.1. Delegation of Authority

6.1.1. New Organizations

6.1.1.1. Companies interested in obtaining authorization as a Recognized Organization, Recognized Security Organization, or accepted as a Classification Society, to carry out statutory certification and services on behalf of the Republic of Panama, shall submit a formal application letter, through its legal representative, to the General Directorate of Merchant Marine of the Panama Maritime Authority. This letter should be accompanied by the documents listed in Article 3 / Article 4 of Resolution No. 106-023-DGMM of March 30, 2022.

6.1.1.2. The evaluation process shall be according to the provisions of Article 9 and Article 19 of Resolution No. 106-023-DGMM of March 30, 2022.

6.1.1.3. Once approved, a reasoned resolution will be issued and the Official Delegation Agreement signed, as a confirmation that the company has been authorized as a Recognized Organization by the Republic of Panama, as stated in paragraph 11 of Resolution No. 106-023-DGMM of March 30, 2022.

6.1.2. Authorized Recognized Organizations

6.1.2.1. Recognized Organizations duly authorized by this Administration and interested in broadening the delegation of authority (full, partial), shall apply through their legal representative, in a formal letter addressed to the General Directorate of Merchant Marine of the Panama Maritime Authority and accompanied by the documents listed in Article 8 of Resolution No. 106-023-DGMM of March 30, 2022.

6.1.2.2. The evaluation process shall be according to the provisions of Article 9 of Resolution No. 106-023-DGMM of March 30, 2022.

6.1.2.3. Once approved, a reasoned resolution will be issued, as stated in paragraph 11 of Resolution No. 106-023-DGMM of March 30, 2022.

6.1.2.4. Recognized Organizations not having full or partial authorization to conduct a specific inspection, survey, audit, plan review, approval, and issue interim and/or full-term certificate for a specific ship(s), and are interested in doing so, should contact ro-monitoring@segumar.com for the evaluation and issuance of a limited authorization.

6.2. Oversight Program

6.2.1. In order to determine the aspects of managerial, technical, and administrative capacity, competence, capacity, and full knowledge of the work carried out by the Recognized Organizations within the framework of the delegation of authority, based on Resolution No. 106-023-DGMM of March 30, 2022; this Administration has adopted different mechanisms to oversight the Recognized Organizations by conducting:

6.2.1.1. Audits,
6.2.1.2. Annual Performance Evaluations (i.e., PSC performance, Malpractice),
6.2.1.3. Remote monitoring (not regarded as audit),
6.2.1.4. Follow-Up Visits,
6.2.1.5. Any other activity considered appropriate to carry out the work of supervision and monitoring.

6.3. List of authorized Recognized Organizations

6.3.1. In order to comply with the National Regulations and International Conventions duly ratified by the Republic of Panama, the below listed Recognized Organizations and Recognized Security Organizations have been entrusted with the surveys/ inspections/ audits/ approvals and the issuance of relevant statutory certification on behalf of the Republic of Panama.

Recognized Organization Name	Status
1. American Bureau of Shipping.	Active
2. Bureau Veritas Marine & Offshore SAS (Bureau Veritas).	Active
3. China Classification Society.	Active
4. CR Classification Society.	Active
5. Croatian Register of Shipping.	Active

6.	DNV AS (DNV).	Active
7.	Dromon Bureau of Shipping Limited.	Active
8.	Emirates Classification Society (TASNEEF) L.L.C.	Active
9.	Indian Register of Shipping.	Active
10.	Intermaritime Certification Services, S.A.	Active
11.	International Maritime Register (Panama), Inc.	Active
12.	International Naval Surveys Bureau, S.A. (INSB Class)	Active
13.	Isthmus Bureau of Shipping.	Active
14.	Korean Register.	Active
15.	Lloyd's Register Group Limited.	Active
16.	Macosnar Corporation.	Active
17.	National Shipping Adjuster, Inc.	Active
18.	New United (Int'l) Marine Services Limited	Active
19.	Nippon Kaiji Kyokai.	Active
20.	Overseas Marine Certification Services, Inc. (OMCS)	Active
21.	Panama Classification Bureau, Inc.	Active
22.	Panama Maritime Documentation Services, Inc.	Active
23.	Panama Shipping Registrar Inc.	Active
24.	Phoenix Register of Shipping, S.A.	Active
25.	Polski Rejestr Statków S.A.	Active
26.	Qualitas Register of Shipping, S.A.	Active
27.	RINA SERVICES S.p.A.	Active
28.	Russian Maritime Register of Shipping.	Active
29.	Türk Loydu Uygunluk degerlendirme Hizmetleri Anonim Sirketi (Türk Loydu).	Active

6.4. Specification of Documents

6.4.1. Certificates

Technical Certificates issued by the Recognized Organizations on behalf of the Republic of Panama shall meet the following specifications:

a. Technical certificates shall follow exactly the format prescribed in the annexes to the pertinent conventions, and written in English.

b. All of the provisional conventions Technical Certificates issued shall clearly show the name(s) of the surveyor(s) / auditor(s) who carried out the survey / audit, as well as signature(s).

c. All convention technical certificates shall be signed by the individual(s) duly authorized by the Recognized Organization to do so.

d. The Coat of Arm of the Republic of Panama shall be printed at the head of each certificate issued on behalf of the Republic of Panama according to the following specifications and as indicated by the convention (state):

- Full-color Coat of Arm shall be printed on a green background , or
- Gray color or Heraldic lines Coat of Arm.

6.4.2. Approvals

According to the provisions of some instruments, certain plans, manuals, booklets, or documents need to be approved by the Administration. In such cases, Recognized Organizations authorized should stamp them with the statement: "Approved on behalf of the Administration". If approvals are not explicitly required by the regulations to be approved by the Administration, they should be stamped as approved on behalf of the Recognized Organizations. Every approval shall be reported as indicated in the MMC-324.

6.5. Administrative fee

Information about the Administrative fees for the issuance and approvals of certificates, documents, plans, manuals, and booklets have been set in the following merchant marine circulars:

6.5.1. MMC-324 - Control and Administrative Fees imposed by the Republic of Panama to the Technical Documents, Statutory Certificates issued, endorsements and approvals
6.5.2. MMC-345 - Ballast Water Management Convention 2004, Panama Policy.
6.5.3. MMC-386 - Inventory of Hazardous Materials (IHM) for ships calling at EU ports.

6.6. Communication by the Administration

Recognized Organizations shall monitor and follow up on communications, instructions, or policies given by this Administration through the publication of the Merchant Marine Circulars and Merchant Marine Notices by accessing https://www.panamashipregistry.com/segumar/merchant-marine-circulars, as well as the Resolutions through which IMO resolutions and circulars are adopted, available by accessing https://www.panamashipregistry.com/segumar/pma-imo/ .

November, 2026 *– Paragraph 6.3.1.7 amended. Dromon Bureau of Shipping new authorization.*
July, 2026 *– Paragraph 6.3.1(27) amended; RS Classification Services Single-Member Private Company excluded as Recognized Organization (Canceled).*
January, 2026 *- Paragraph 6.3.1(13) amended, International Register of Shipping excluded as Recognized Organization.*
February, 2025 – *Paragraph 6.3.1.1 - American Bureau of Shipping hyperlink updated / Paragraph 6.6 amended as follow: "as well as the Resolutions through which IMO resolutions and circulars are adopted, available by accessing https://www.panamashipregistry.com/segumar/pma-imo/".*
December, 2024 – *Paragraph 4 amended, DEFINITIONS included, and subsequent paragraphs renumbered / Paragraph 6.1.2.4 newly added / Paragraph 6.3 - List of Recognized Organizations amended / Paragraph 6.4.2. newly added / Paragraph 6.5 newly added.*
November, 2023 *– Entirely revised. This Merchant Marine Circular replaces MMC-36.*
March, 2021 *– DNV GL change of name to DNV*
December, 2020 – *Inclusion of Panama Classification Bureau, Inc., paragraph 5 was added and revision through the text.*
March, 2020 – *Suspension of Panama Classification Bureau Inc.*
November, 2019 – *Overseas Marine Certification Services, Inc. correction name.*
June, 2019 – *Change of Polski Rejestr Statków to Polski Rejestr Statków S.A.*
January, 2019 – *Inclusion of RS Classification Single Member Private Company.*
January, 2019 - *Recognition of Hellenic Register of Shipping has been revoked due to thecessation of operations.*
October, 2018 – *Inclusion of New United (Int'l) Marine Services Limited, Emirates Classification Society (TASNEEF) L.L.C. and Panama Classification Bureau Inc.*
November, 2017 - *Inclusion of Dromon Bureau of Shipping.*
November, 2017 - *Inclusion of Türk Loydu.*
July, 2017 - *Correction of the name "DNV GL AS" for "DNV GL".*
March, 2017- *Inclusion of Croatian Register of Shipping.*
February, 2017- *Suspension of Panama Marine Survey and Certification Services.*
January, 2017 - *Closing of the company Universal Shipping Bureau Inc.*
April, 2016 - *Suspension of Global Shipping Class Inc.*
February, 2016 - *Suspension of Panama Bureau of Shipping and Panama RegisterCorporation.*
November, 2015 - *Change of REGISTRO ITALIANO NAVALE to RINA SERVICES S.p.A.*
February, 2015 - *Cancellation of Global Shipping Bureau, Inc.*
September, 2014 – *Correction of name for China Corporation Register of Shipping and Lloyd's Register.*
August, 2012 - *Inclusion of RO.*
October, 2011 - *Format update.*
March, 2011 – *Format update.*
March, 2011 – *Inclusion of RO.*
January, 2011 - *Inclusion of RO.*
October, 2010 - *Inclusion of RO and format.*

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February, 2010 - *List of RO´s.*
November, 2009 - *List of RO´s.*
July, 2007 – *List of RO´s.*
December, 2006 - *List of RO´s.*
April, 2006 - *List of RO´s.*
October, 2004.

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

RO-RSO Monitoring Department
General Directorate of Merchant Marine
Panama Maritime Authority

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E-mail: ro-monitoring@segumar.com
Website: https://www.panamashipregistry.com/segumar/merchant-marine-circulars/