



**PANAMA MARITIME AUTHORITY  
General Directorate of Merchant Marine**

**Merchant Marine Circular No. 198**

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**To:** **Shipowners/Operators, Legal Representatives, Recognized Organizations, Masters of Panamanian Flagged Vessels**

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**Subject:** **Renewal of the Bunkers Convention Certificate**

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**References:** **International Convention on Civil Liability for Bunker Oil Pollution Damage of 2001 (Bunkers Convention).**  
**Merchant Marine Circular No. 180**

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1. The purpose of this Merchant Marine Circular is to provide the guidelines to be followed in order to obtain the Renewal of the Bunker Convention Certificate, taking into account that the majority of the certificates, already issued, will expire on 2 February 2009.
2. Until this Administration finalizes the formal process of ratifying the Bunker Convention, Owners/Operators, or Representatives of Panamanian flagged vessels can renew the Bunker Convention Certificate, following the procedures established on Merchant Marine Circular No. 180. This means that this Administration maintains the agreement undersigned with Cook Island Maritime Authorities, regarding the issuance of this Certificate to Panamanian flagged vessels.
3. Owners/Operators are encouraged to apply for the renewal of the certificates as soon as possible, in order to avoid delays towards the expiration date of the previous certificate. For renewal of the certificate the vessel only need to submit the proof of insurance or other financial security, and evidence that the payment has been made.
4. The Panama Maritime Administration wants to remind Owners/Operators that according to the article of the Convention, any State Party can issue the certificate to vessels of states non Party; this means that the certificates issued by the Cook Island Administration to Panamanian flagged vessels is fully acceptable by State Parties.
5. Regarding the ratification of the Bunker Convention 2001 by the Republic of Panama, this Administration informs that the Convention has been adopted by law N°. 7 of January 14, 2009 and the instrument will be deposited into the Secretariat of the International Maritime Organization before the ending of January 2009.
6. According to Article 14, paragraph 2, of the Convention:

*"For any State which ratifies, accepts, approves or accedes to it after the conditions in paragraph 1 for entry into force have been met, this Convention shall enter into force three months after the date of deposit by such State of the appropriate instrument."*

7. Based on the previous paragraph, the Panama Maritime Administration will be able to issue the Bunker Convention Certificate on May, 2009; meanwhile, the agreement with the Cook Island Administration will still be enforced.

**January 2009**

**Inquiries concerning the subject of this Circular or any request should be directed to:**

**Directorate General of Merchant Marine**

**Panama Maritime Authority**

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