



**PANAMA MARITIME AUTHORITY**

*Directorate General of Merchant Marine*

*Office of the Department Merchant Marine Circular No.101*

*Maritime Safety*

**To: Shipowners/Operators, Masters of Panamanian Flag Vessels, Consular Offices, Law Firms, Class Societies and other Recognized Organizations**

**Subject: New Requirements for the Registration of Vessels**

Since the Flag State Administration, in this case Panama, is ultimately responsible for the implementation of the International Safety Management Code (ISM Code) for its vessels, this Administration issues this Merchant Marine Circular as part of a continuing series of reminders to cognizant parties in its Registry as to the urgency of accomplishing the objectives of the Code.

**APPLICATION OF THE ISM CODE**

As per July 1, 1998 the CODE will apply to the following vessels:

- PASSENGER VESSELS WITHOUT GT LIMIT
- HIGH SPEED CRAFT (CARGO OR PASSENGER)
- BULK CARRIERS ABOVE 500 GT
- TANKERS ABOVE 500 GT

As per July 1, 2002, the CODE will apply to all other Cargo vessels above 500 Gt

**REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS FROM July 1, 1998:**

As noted by circular letter AMP 004-98 from the Administrator on June 26 1998, the Administration will require as condition for Registration the compliance with the ISM CODE. Therefore, in order to register a vessel, the competent authority will require the following Certificates:

- **Document of compliance (DOC)** issued to the company which is operating the vessel, and
- **Safety Management Certificate (SMC)** issued to the vessel

These certificates must be valid, and can be interim or permanent.

1. In the case that the above-mentioned certificates have been issued on behalf of another Administration, or a Class Society or Recognized Organization NOT approved by the Panama Maritime Authority, the vessel CAN BE REGISTERED on a PROVISIONAL BASIS ONLY. In this instance, the Consular Offices and the Department of Shipping (SECNAVES) must do the following:
  - Copies of such mentioned Certificates must be sent to the office of SEGUMAR in order to obtain a dispensation letter authorizing the vessel to sail for a period of 6 months (Provisional Patente Period). By the end of this period, all documents must be supplied and issued on behalf of Panama by any of the following Organization:

American Bureau of Shipping Korean Register of Shipping

Bureau Veritas Lloyd's Register of Shipping

China Classification Society Nippon Kaiji Kyokai

China Corporation Register of Shipping Panama Bureau of Shipping

Det Norske Veritas Panama Maritime Doc. Services Inc.

Germanischer Lloyd Panama Register Corporation

Hellenic Register of Shipping Polski Rejestr Statkow

Isthmus Bureau of Shipping Registro Italiano Navale

- If No compliance is achieved by the end of the 6 months, the vessel will automatically be deleted from the Registry.
- 2. In case that a vessel does not have any certificate, it CANNOT be registered, not even provisionally.
- 3. For an already registered vessel that requires a change/renewal of PATENTE for any of the following reasons:
  - a. Change of name
  - b. Change of owner
  - c. Change of tonnage
  - d. Renewal of Patente

The competent authorities must require copy of valid certificates (DOC and SMC) issued on behalf of the Panamanian Administration, only. If any of the documents are not presented, the vessel will be canceled until the certificates are supplied.

**October, 2023 – Cancelled**  
**June 1998**

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

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CANCELLED