

October 30, 2002

## **FLEET / SAFETY LETTER 02056.FVS**

### **RE: RESPONSIBILITIES, SEAWORTHINESS AND COMPLIANCE**

Please refer to Fleet / Safety Letter 01051.FVS concerning responsibilities, seaworthiness, and compliance with international and other agreements. This letter is an update to the previous letter.

#### **International, Multilateral, or Bilateral Fishing Agreements**

Violations of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) regional requirements have recently been called to our attention. Two vessels were identified illegally fishing in the western part of the Eastern Pacific Ocean which falls under IATTC control. The owners were immediately notified and the vessels left the area. The owners have been fined \$50,000, and the vessels will be summarily deleted from the registry for any further violations of any regional requirements.

The owners expressed a lack of knowledge concerning the IATTC requirements, however, ignorance of regional fishing agreement requirements is no excuse for violations of the agreements. Owners must familiarize themselves with the requirements of each regional fishery agreement in areas adjacent to their normal operating area to ensure that they do not inadvertently "cross the line" and violate those agreements.

Failure to comply with any regional agreement will result in the imposition of large fines along with immediate suspension or deletion of any noncompliant vessel, and may include suspension or revocation of seafarer licenses, or the refusal to cancel a vessel's registration.

#### **Other International Requirements**

The previous letter reminded owners that they must comply with the applicable provisions of the following Conventions: SOLAS, in particular, Chapter V; MARPOL; Collision Prevention Regulations, 1972; ITC 69 Tonnage Convention.

## **Voluntary ISM Compliance**

We encourage owners to establish a safety management system, and we would be pleased to assist in that regards. Ms. Emily Sporn, Manager – Special Projects, of this office, has a great deal of knowledge and experience in establishing such systems. If properly designed and implemented, such systems can almost guarantee a significant decrease in accidents, injuries, and operating costs.

## **Vanuatu Maritime Act and Regulations**

All vessels flying the Vanuatu flag, including fishing vessels, must comply fully with the Maritime Act and Regulations. Officers must be licensed; vessels must be manned in accordance with the minimum safe manning certificates; “Reports of Ship’s Officers” must be submitted; fire and abandon ship drills must be held weekly; steering gear drills and line throwing apparatus instructions must be given quarterly, and logged; casualties, accidents, injuries, deaths, and spills must be reported immediately; vessels must be presented for annual inspections; etc.

## **Fishing Vessel Seaworthiness**

Casualties among fishing vessels in the Vanuatu fleet continue to far exceed casualties in the non-fishing vessel fleet. Fishing vessels registered under the Vanuatu flag must remain safe and seaworthy, and must be able to document this at least on an annual basis. Non-classed fishing vessels are also issued certificates of seaworthiness after successfully completing their annual inspections. These certificates remain valid for one year. Once a certificate expires, the vessel is prohibited from fishing until the vessel can be re-inspected, and a new certificate is issued.

## **Safety Equipment Requirements for Fishing Vessels**

Initial and annual inspections have identified that some fishing vessels lack certain basic equipment. While this letter does not in any way list all equipment required, it does identify some mandatory equipment that has been found missing. Each fishing vessel, regardless of size, must carry a sextant; a chronometer; sufficient nautical publications and charts for celestial navigation; an international shore connection; at least two SCBAs; and at least two firemen’s outfits. Liferafts and hydrostatic releases must be serviced by an authorized service facility annually. Fixed and portable fire extinguishing equipment must also be serviced annually.

## **North Pacific Fishing Vessel Owners Association (NPFVOA)**

Vanuatu Maritime Services Limited is an associate member of the NPFVOA. This organization is dedicated to education and training in marine safety. Because we believe so strongly in the NPFVOA, current or prospective Vanuatu flag vessel owners, who are members of NPFVOA, and wish to register additional vessels under the Vanuatu flag, ***are eligible for a reduction in initial registration fees.***

## **AMVER**

We recommend all fishing vessels participate in AMVER or other reporting schemes. Prospective owners with participating vessels ***are eligible for a small reduction in initial registration fees.***

## **EPIRBS**

Every fishing vessel in the Vanuatu fleet, regardless of size, must carry a float free 406 MHZ satellite EPIRB and it must be programmed with the MMSI issued by this office.

## **Minimum Safe Manning**

Each fishing vessel must comply with the minimum safe manning certificate issued by this office. At least 2 deck officers must also have radio licenses, either GOC or RTO depending on the radio installation on board the vessel.

## **Torremolinos Fishing Vessel Convention and STCW-F**

When these Conventions come into force, Vanuatu flagged fishing vessels must comply.

## **Closing**

In closing, this office remains committed to the safety and quality of the vessels flying the Vanuatu flag, and the credibility of the Vanuatu flag itself. We know that you, as a responsible fishing vessel owner, subscribe to those same commitments.

Best Regards,

Donald J. Sheetz  
Executive Vice President



**Website: [www.vanuatuships.com](http://www.vanuatuships.com)**

## FLEET SAFETY LETTERS

(Issued as of October 30, 2002, and still in print.)

94003.GEN	-	LIFEBOATS, GENERAL, July 29, 1994
94004.FVS	-	FISHERMAN SAFETY, July 29, 1994
94006.FVS	-	REFLEXIONS: TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD, September 7, 1994
95010.BLK	-	MSC/CIRC.690--SHIP/ShORE SAFETY CHECKLIST, August 9, 1995
96020.GEN	-	CARGO SECURING MANUAL, July 16, 1996
96023.GEN	-	ENCLOSED SPACE ENTRY, August 9, 1996
97026.FVS	-	NEW FISHING VESSEL SAFETY RULES FOR EU, January 2, 1997
97027.BLK	--	BULK CARRIER TERMINAL REPORTING FORM, February 5, 1997
97029.GEN	-	GARBAGE RECORD BOOKS, July 15, 1997
97030.FVS	-	FISHING VESSEL SAFETY, August 1, 1997
98035.GEN	-	STCW REST PROVISIONS AND HUMAN FATIGUE ON BOARDS SHIPS, March 10, 1998
98036.FVS	-	SIDE SHELL FAILURE ON A TUNA PURSE SEINE FISHING VESSEL, March 10, 1998
99043.FVS	-	BEST PRACTICES GUIDE TO VESSEL STABILITY, March 2, 1999
99045.FVS	-	MARPOL VIOLATIONS, July 15, 1999
99046.GEN	-	FRAUDULENT LICENSES AND SEAFARER DOCUMENTS, November 3, 1999
00047.GEN	-	ANNUAL FLEET SAFETY LETTER, January 1, 2000
00048.GEN	-	SHIPS AND FISHING VESSELS, August 23, 2000
01050.GEN	--	ANNUAL FLEET SAFETY LETTER, January 1, 2001
01051.FVS	-	FISHING VESSELS -- RESPONSIBILITIES, Etc., February 15, 2001
01052.GEN	-	VANUATU MARITIME ACT AND REGULATIONS, March 23, 2001
02053.GEN	-	ANNUAL FLEET SAFETY LETTER, January 7, 2002
02054.SEL	-	RATINGS' CERTIFICATES/ENDORSEMENTS ISSUED UNDER STCW 95, January 9, 2002
02055.GEN	-	REGULATORY UPDATE, October 30, 2002
02056.FVS	-	RESPONSIBILITIES, SEAWORTHINESS AND COMPLIANCE, October 30, 2002
02057.GEN	-	MEDICAL ALERT, October 30, 2002

**Key:**

GEN	=	General	FVS	=	Fishing Vessels
BLK	=	Bulk Carriers	TKR	=	Tankers
SEL	=	Selected	OSV	=	Offshore Supply Vessels
SPC	=	Special	PAS	=	Passenger