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FLEET / SAFETY LETTER 07091.GEN

RE: SAFETY REQUIREMENTS AND FLAG STATE INSPECTIONS FOR SMALL VESSELS UNDER 500 GT, FISHING VESSELS, AND NON SELF-PROPELLED VESSELS

To clarify certain issues, and respond to frequently asked questions, all self-propelled vessels of less than convention size, all fishing vessels, and all non self-propelled vessels (other than MODUs) registered under the flag of the Republic of Vanuatu, must comply, at a minimum, with the IACS ***Safety Guidelines for Cargo Ships of Less Than Convention Size***. All other vessels must comply with SOLAS or the MODU Code, as appropriate.

All self-propelled vessels of 500 gt or more (ITC tonnage), other than fishing vessels, must comply with SOLAS with regard to the International Safety Management (ISM) Code, not later than 1 January 2010, and with regard to the International Ship and Port Security (ISPS) Code requirements, not later than 1 July 2008, regardless of any regulatory tonnage assigned under the ITC 69 interim scheme.

All vessels regardless of whether they are self-propelled, non self-propelled, MODUs or fishing vessels, must comply with SOLAS, Chapter V, as appropriate. Certain exemptions are available for non-self propelled vessels and fishing vessels.

The Vanuatu Maritime Regulations, Chapter 6, Section 33, addresses safety inspections and states in part: "...a Deputy Commissioner may...appoint Marine Inspectors to board and examine or inspect vessels..." Under this provision, most convention sized, self-propelled vessels, most fishing vessels, and many MODUs are regularly and routinely inspected on an annual basis. To ensure that all other vessels are regularly inspected and maintained to the standards expected of Vanuatu flagged vessels, effective 1 April 2008, the owners of every vessel under 500 gt, every non self-propelled vessel, and every fishing vessel, must present those vessels for inspection on an annual basis within 3 months before or after the anniversary date of its previous inspection. Exceptions to this requirement will be considered on a case by case basis depending on location of the vessels and availability of inspectors. However, failure to present a vessel for inspection may result in fines and/or other penalties.

Those vessels which have not been inspected within the year prior to 1 April 2008 should be presented no later than 1 July 2008 for inspection. On completion of a satisfactory inspection, a Certificate of Inspection (or in the case of fishing vessels, a Certificate of Seaworthiness) will be issued to the vessel valid for a maximum of 15 months from the time of the actual inspection, and must be presented to any competent port state or flag state authority, if requested.

The current Report of Safety Inspection, Form SI 103 (5/05 or as may be amended from time to time), contained in VMS MB # 103, which may be downloaded from the website www.vanuatuships.com, shall be followed as closely as possible to verify that the vessel and its equipment are in good condition, that the officers and crew are appropriately documented, and that they perform their duties competently.

Please remember to present your vessels for inspection before the due date.

If you have any questions or comments contact VMSL New York.

Best Regards,

Donald J. Sheetz
Executive Vice President

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