

## **08092.GEN - Beginning of the year Safety Letter**



FLEET / SAFETY LETTER 08092.GEN

BEGINNING OF THE NEW YEAR SAFETY LETTER

(NB: This document also available in its entirety as a PDF)

As we begin the New Year we wish everyone a happy and healthy 2008.

The registry ended the year with a record of over 600 vessels, and our focus continues on operating a quality and safety conscious registry. January 11, 2008

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### **OVER THE PAST YEAR – 2007:**

- PSC detentions of Vanuatu vessels remained low (5, with one under protest) but higher than previous years.
- The number of safety inspections completed was the highest ever conducted.
- Personnel injuries were lower than previous years but, unfortunately, the numbers of deaths were the same as last year. Two (2) deaths were from natural causes, one (1) from drowning when washed over board, one (1) from injuries sustained from taking a wave on deck, one (1) from drowning when vessel sank, and one (1) diver when working underwater.
- False EPIRB alerts continue to average about two (2) per month with a significant number from deleted or unknown ships.
- The number of fires tripled to six (6).

### **2007 CASUALTY HIGHLIGHTS:**

The total number of casualty reports submitted in 2007 was down from the previous year. A few of the more significant incidents are highlighted here:

- A diver was pulled up when he became tangled in a line and died.
- A vessel sank in rough seas after steering was lost and deck cargo broke loose. Eleven (11) crew abandoned ship and ten (10) survived, while one (1) died.
- A rig being towed started to take on water and was grounded to save the rig.
- A barge loaded with construction equipment and containers took on a list and sank while being towed across the Indian Ocean.

### **FOR 2008 AND BEYOND**

#### **ISM CODE TO BE TIGHTENED**

At the next meeting of the IMO's Maritime Safety committee (MSC) two Circulars which aim to strengthen the operational implementation of the ISM Code will be presented for approval. These Circulars place greater emphasis on performing internal annual audits and internal system reviews by

qualified persons. Greater focus is also placed on the SMS review/assessment by the company and the master who should take into account reporting and analysis of non-conformities, accidents and hazardous occurrences. Recognizing that a key role in implementing the ISM Code is played by the Designated Person Ashore, DPA, a second Circular provides qualification, training and experience for the DPA. The Circular recommends formal education from a tertiary institution within a relevant field of management, engineering or physical sciences. Alternatively, seagoing experience as a certified ship's officer or formal education with three years practical experience at a ship management level are also acceptable.

#### GMDSS MANUAL REWRITTEN

IMO has completely revised its comprehensive handbook on Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS), which has been made available as the GMDSS Manual. The manual (formerly the GMDSS Handbook) sets out the principles on which the GMDSS is based, the radio communication requirements and recommendations for its implementation, the operational performance standards and technical specifications to be met by GMDSS equipment, and the procedures for and method of operation of the various radio services that comprise the system and the GMDSS master plan. It is available from authorized distributors of IMO publications.

#### INVESTIGATIONS

A new draft code, to replace the existing Code for the investigation of marine casualties and incidents will be submitted to the Maritime Safety Committee at its 84th session in mid-2008, for adoption. The Code will require a marine safety investigation to be conducted into every "very serious marine casualty", defined as a marine casualty involving the total loss of the ship or a death or severe damage to the environment. The Code will also recommend an investigation into marine casualties (other than very serious marine casualties) and marine incidents, by flag State of a ship involved, if it is considered likely that a marine safety investigation will provide information that can be used to prevent marine casualties and marine incidents in the future.

#### AUTOMATIC IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM (AIS)

IMO has established standards for the annual testing of the AIS. The Guidelines may be obtained from this web site: [http://194.196.162.45/includes/blastDataOnly.asp/data\\_id%3D20283/1252.pdf](http://194.196.162.45/includes/blastDataOnly.asp/data_id%3D20283/1252.pdf) or search: MSC.1/Circ.1252. Upon completion of the test, a copy of the test report should be retained onboard the vessel.

#### SECURITY OFFICER CERTIFICATION (SSO)

Commencing 1 January 2008 all new SSO training must comply with the revised STCW requirements and be issued a certificate of proficiency. Effective on 1 January 2009 it is a requirement for existing SSO's who have been trained to also have certificates of proficiency as per STCW regulation. Please review the complete STCW regulation.

#### FAST RESCUE BOATS

Amendments to part A of the STCW Code, entered into force on 1 January 2008 adding additional training requirements for the launching and recovery of fast rescue boats. The amendments were adopted in response to reports of injuries to seafarers in numerous incidents involving the launching and recovery of fast rescue boats in adverse weather conditions.

#### LONG RANGE IDENTIFICATION AND TRACKING OF SHIPS (LRIT)

The regulation in SOLAS, Chapter V, Safety of Navigation, introduces LRIT as a mandatory requirement

for ships on international voyages, as follows:

- Passenger ships, including high-speed craft; cargo ships, of 300 gross tonnage and upward; and mobile offshore drilling units.
- Ships constructed on or after 31 December 2008 must be fitted with a system to transmit automatically the identity of the ship, the position and the date and time of the position provided.
- Ships constructed before 31 December 2008 and certified for operations in sea area A1 and A2, or A1, A2 and A3, must be fitted with the equipment not later than the first survey of the radio installation after 31 December 2008.
- Ships constructed before 31 December 2008 and certified for operations in sea area A1, A2, A3 and A4, must comply not later than the first survey of the radio installation after 1 July 2009 (but must comply earlier, as above if they operate within sea areas A2 and A3).
- Ships operating exclusively in sea area A1 and fitted with an automatic identification system (AIS) are exempted from the requirement to transmit LRIT information.

The LRIT system is intended to be operational with respect to the transmission of LRIT information by ships from 30 December 2008.

These are only highlights of some of the pending changes in Conventions. We strongly recommend that owners subscribe to the IMO publication IMO NEWS for regular updates of pending changes and also regularly visit the Vanuatu website [www.vanuatuships.com](http://www.vanuatuships.com).

Should you have any questions, please contact Captain Art Bjorkner or Don Sheetz by email or fax.

Smooth seas and fair winds!

Art Bjorkner Donald J. Sheetz  
Senior Manager, Safety, Quality Executive Vice President  
and Security