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CIRCULAR

Long Range Identification and Tracking of Ships – Panamanian requirements.

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Notice to: Ship Owners/ Managers/ Operators / Surveyors

The Panama Maritime Authority has revised Merchant Marine Circular **MMC-195**, which provides instructions on implementing, maintenance and compliance with the requirements for the Long-Range Identification and Tracking of ships (LRIT) on board Panamanian-flagged vessels.

The Circular supersedes MMC-197, MMC-249 and MMC-400.

Points to Note:

Panama LRIT National Data Centre (NDC)

The Panama Maritime Authority has established a National Data Centre, operated on its behalf by Polestar (www.polestarglobal.com), who are authorized to undertake shipborne equipment testing and the issuance of Conformance Test Reports (CTR).

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All applicable Panamanian registered vessels will be integrated into the Panama LRIT Data Centre and subject to a satisfactory conformance test of the shipborne LRIT equipment.

Conformance Test validity and amendments

All Conformance Test Reports (CTR) issued on behalf of the Republic of Panama are to be issued as electronic documents with an electronic signature and a QR Code. The Panama Maritime Authority will not accept conformance tests carried out under another registry.

All Conformance Test Reports will be issued with validity not exceeding twelve (12) months from the conformance test completion date.

Changes in vessel name, ownership, Maritime Mobile Service Identity, Distinctive Number or Letters, Gross Tonnage, or Ship Areas where the vessel is certified to operate will not require a new Conformance Test, but an amended Conformance Test Report (CTR) (with the same validity period) will need to be obtained.

For the **Annual Conformance Test**, the following apply:

The annual conformance test shall be conducted annually based on the anniversary date of the last conformance test.

All Conformance Tests shall be conducted directly by Consorcio Maritime Intelligence Group 2022, as Recognized ASP on behalf of the Panama Maritime Authority.

Information on how to request a Conformance Test and/or a Conformance Test Report can be found at <https://ondemand.polestarglobal.com/?page=login>.

Authorization Conformance Test

From April 10th, 2025, all users are able to apply through the E-Segumar platform for the authorization letter related to conformance test report (CTR) at: <https://certificates.amp.gob.pa/certificates/>.

These authorizations, which are free of charge and are valid for 30 days, are processed through the main office in Panama.

- LRIT Process for New Construction
- LRIT Process for Change of Flag
- Vessel operating in Jurisdictional waters
- Laid up LRIT reporting
- Postpone LRIT Conformance Test Report (only for ships that already have an issued CTR)

From May 1st, 2025, all users are able to apply through the E-Segumar platform for the authorization letter related to malfunctioning of the LRIT or AIS at: <https://certificates.amp.gob.pa/certificates/>.

- LRIT Malfunction
- AIS Malfunction
- LRIT Equipment Replacement

Survey and Certification - Instructions to the Recognized Organizations (RO)

The RO is to ensure that vessels/units have a valid **Conformance Test Report (CTR)** on board during applicable surveys.

If the ship is undergoing radio inspection and does not have the Conformance Test Report (**CTR**) on board, but there is evidence that the Recognized ASP has initiated the test, the RO may issue a Conditional Safety Equipment Certificate valid for **one (1) month**, without prior authorization from the Segumar Office, however a copy of the conditional certificate is to be immediately sent to conditionals@segumar.gob.pa.

The RO cannot issue a fully valid Safety Equipment Certificate if the vessel does not have a valid Conformance Test Report on board, or in cases where the vessel is not within the NDC.

If the vessel has the radio inspection report and has already completed the conformance test, but the equipment on board does not meet the LRIT performance standards, authorization may be granted to the RO to issue a Conditional Safety Equipment Certificate valid for three months.

For cargo ships of gross tonnage of 300 and above but of less than 500, compliance with the LRIT requirements should be verified by confirming that a valid Conformance Test Report is on board at annual surveys.

A shipowner intending to install a dedicated terminal on board for LRIT purposes needs to do so sufficiently in advance of the vessel's first Safety Radio Survey to ensure the LRIT CTR is delivered to the ship in time for the first Survey.

Exemptions and Equivalent Arrangements

Panamanian vessels that are operating exclusively in a GMDSS A1 Sea area and are fitted with an Automatic Identification System (AIS) are not required to comply with the provisions of SOLAS Chapter V, Regulation 19-1. Therefore, an exemption certification from the requirement to comply with SOLAS Chapter V, Regulation 19-1 is not required.

Where the vessel maintains a CTR to operate at A2+A3 but the vessel is operating in domestic waters for a period of time, it must inform the Administration at conformancetest@amp.gob.pa and apply for authorization to stop reporting by LRIT equipment.

Vessels not normally engaged in international voyages but requiring to undertake a single international voyage, or which are re-positioning from a GMDSS sea area A1, should apply to the Administration at exemptions@segumar.com.gob.pa for consideration of exemption or equivalence per the provisions of SOLAS regulations I/4, IV/3.1, IV/3.2 and V/3.

Any application for exemption or equivalence is to include details of the proposed voyage, including dates, length of voyage, port/place of departure and port/location of destination.

The RO will liaise with the PMA, and if the exemption is granted or equivalent arrangement accepted, the PMA will authorize the RO accordingly and advise of any applicable conditions so that the affected certificate can be duly annotated.

Panamanian vessels applying for exemptions should note that, under MSC.1/Circ. 1295 Guidance for certain ship types which are required to transmit LRIT info on exemptions, equivalents and certain operational matters, there may be a requirement for the Company to submit the voyage plan (and any amendments) and/or to report at specified intervals to not only the government(s) of the State(s) where the vessel is proceeding but also, the government(s) of the coastal State(s) in whose waters the vessel might be navigating, subject to those countries being entitled to the information under the requirements of SOLAS V/19-1.

Applications for permanent exemptions for offshore units operating in a fixed location, such as FPSOs, are to be made directly to the PMA: exemptions@segumar.com. The exemption request should state the latitude/longitude of the unit and the period of time that it will remain at the specified location. Where no period is stated, the exemption will be valid until the expiry date of the radio-related certificate.

Act now

Ship Owners/ Managers/ Operators/ Surveyors are to review the contents of Circular **MMC-195** and be guided accordingly.