

Merchant Marine Circular

Panama Maritime Authority
General Directorate of Merchant Marine
Control and Compliance Department

MERCHANT MARINE CIRCULAR MMC-175

- To:** Parties, Administrations, Port State Control Authorities, Ship-owners/Operators, Recognized Organizations (RO's), Seafarers, Legal Representatives, Authorized Maritime Training Centers, Authorized Medical Practitioners (MD), Privative Consulates of Merchant Marine of the Republic of Panama, Inspectorates, Auxiliary Registry Offices, Authorized Offices, Brokers, and users of the Panama Ship Registry.
- Subject:** Crew Dispensations under the Article VIII of the 1978 STCW Convention, as amended.
- Reference:** 1978 STCW Convention, as amended; Law No. 4 of May 15, 1992; Resolution J.D. No. 076-2020 of October 8, 2020 and its modifications, and Resolution ADM No. 072-2021 of April 30, 2021.
Circular DGGM-014 (**Only as recommendation**).
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1. Purpose

- 1.1.** The purpose of this Circular is to communicate to the users of the Panamanian Registry, that, in accordance with Article VIII of the 1978 STCW Convention, as amended, the Panama Maritime Authority may, in circumstances of exceptional necessity, issue a Dispensation permitting a specified seafarer to serve in a specified ships for a specified period, if in our opinion this does not cause danger to persons, property and the environment.

2. Scope

- 2.1.** These provisions apply to all seafarers serving on seagoing ships registered under the Panamanian flag; ship-owners, operators and companies of Panamanian flag ships and to all interested parties, under the provisions of the 1978 STCW Convention.

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3. The General Directorate of Seafarers of the Panama Maritime Authority is in charge of the issuance of Dispensation under the Article VIII of the 1978 STCW Convention, as amended.
4. Requests for the Dispensation under the Article VIII of the 1978 STCW Convention, as amended will be directed to the Headquarters or the Regional Documentation Offices (RDO) of the General Directorate of Seafarers, to the contact information detailed below:

AMERICA		
Certification Department (Headquarters in Panama)	certification@amp.gob.pa verification@amp.gob.pa	(+507) 501-5062/5325
RDO in Miami, United States of America	regionalmiami@amp.gob.pa	(+1) (305) 686-6882 Ext. 101/103
RDO in Houston, United States of America	offshore@segumar.com	(+1) 713 6224451 / 4459 Ext. 102
EUROPE		
RDO in London, United Kingdom	amplondon@amp.gob.pa	(+44) 207 629-3616 / 3650 (+44) 7383-508651
RDO in Piraeus, Greece	ampgreece@amp.gob.pa	(+30) 210 428 6441 Ext. 500
ASIA		
RDO in Dubai, United Arab Emirates	segumar.dubai@panamashipregistry.com	(+971) 4 3526910
RDO in Shanghai, People's Republic of China	info.pmshanghai@amp.gob.pa	(+86) 21-60293386
RDO in Seoul, Republic of Korea (South Korea)	regionalofficeseoul@amp.gob.pa	(+82) 70-4694-4096 / 4097
RDO in Manila, The Philippines	infoampmanila@amp.gob.pa	(+63) 2 8886-9750 (+63) 2 8834-2393
RDO in Tokyo, Japan	crew-license@panaconsul-tokyo.com	(+81) 3-3585-3661
RDO in Imabari, Japan	segumar@segumarimabari.jp	(+81) 898-36-1188
RDO in Singapore, Singapore	segumar.sg@segumar.com	(+65) 6221 8677 Ext. 203 (+65) 8031 8033

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RDO in Mumbai, India	ord.mumbai@amp.gob.pa	(+91) 22-69074040
RDO in Istanbul, Turkey	crewistanbul@panamashipregistry.com	(+90) 212 234 74 77

5. The Panama Maritime Authority establishes that the Dispensation under the Article VIII of the 1978 STCW Convention, as amended, will be issued in the following situations:
 - 5.1. Force Majeure Cases.
 - 5.2. Family Reasons.
 - 5.3. Medical Reasons.
 - 5.4. Special Circumstances.
6. The Panama Maritime Authority determines that for the positions of Master and Chief Engineer, a Dispensation under the Article VIII of the 1978 STCW Convention, as amended, may only be granted in cases of *force majeure* and for periods, as short as possible.
7. The Dispensation granted under the Article VIII of the 1978 STCW Convention, as amended, for positions other than those established in paragraph # 6, shall be issued for a specified period, not exceeding six (6) months.
8. No Dispensation shall be issued under the Article VIII of the 1978 STCW Convention, as amended, for the positions of Radiotelegraph Officer and Radiotelephone Operator, unless the relevant circumstances established in the Radio Regulations occur.
9. The beneficiary of the Dispensation shall be competent for the position for which the Dispensation is granted under the Article VIII of the 1978 STCW Convention, as amended, with the condition of its competence being enough to fill the vacant position without risks, to the satisfaction of the Panama Maritime Authority.
10. To request a Dispensation under the Article VIII of the 1978 STCW Convention, as amended, the company will comply with the technical and administrative requirements established by the General Directorate of Seafarers and complete the application form, available in the following link:
 - 10.1. <https://www.amp.gob.pa/servicios/gente-mar/>



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11. In exceptional cases, the Panama Maritime Authority may issue an Authorization Letter under the condition of “Home Country License”, in accordance with the following situations:

- 11.1. Single voyage for ship delivery.
- 11.2. Damage or loss of technical documentation issued by the Panama Maritime Authority to the Seafarers.
- 11.3. Special Circumstances.

12. To request an Authorization Letter, the company must comply with the technical and administrative requirements established by the General Directorate of Seafarers and complete the request form, available in the following link:

12.1. <https://www.amp.gob.pa/servicios/gente-mar/>

13. The companies shall request the Dispensation under the Article VIII of the 1978 STCW Convention, as amended, as well as the Authorization Letter opportunely and with as much advance notice as possible notice and in a timely manner.

14. The Panama Maritime Authority may issue an **Attesting Letter** for the purpose of attesting the technical documentation for seafarers, issued by this Maritime Administration, in case it is required by the Port State Control Authorities or any Competent Authority.

15. To request an Attesting Letter, the company must comply with the following requirements:

- 15.1. Request addressed by e-mail, according to the contact information in paragraph # 4, detailing the situation that supports the request.
- 15.2. Crew List duly signed and stamped either by the Master or the Company.
- 15.3. Technical Documentation issued by the Panama Maritime Authority.
- 15.4. The valid Ship Registry Certificate.

16. The relevant provision is available at the following link:

16.1. [Resolution ADM No. 072-2021 of April 30, 2021.](#)



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June, 2026 – The Subject, the Reference and the paragraphs # 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 10.1, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 are modified, and the paragraphs # 1.1, 2.1, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 11.1, 11.2, 11.3, 12.1, 15.1, 15.2, 15.3, 15.4, 16 and 16.1 are added.

June, 2021 – Change in the Subject; change in the paragraph # 1, # 2 and # 3 and new paragraphs # 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14.

August, 2018

July, 2008.

Inquiries concerning the subject of this Merchant Marine Circular or any other request should be forward to:

Certification Department and Compliance and Enforcement Department
General Directorate of Seafarers
General Directorate of Merchant Marine
Panama Maritime Authority

Phone: (507) 501-5062 / 5325 / 5288

E-mail: certification@amp.gob.pa / verification@amp.gob.pa /
cumplimientodggm@amp.gob.pa

Website: <https://panamashipregistry.com/circulars/>