



PANAMA MARITIME AUTHORITY
MERCHANT MARINE CIRCULAR MMC-288

PanCanal Building
Albrook, Panama City
Republic of Panama
Tel: (507) 501-5355
jortega@segumar.com

To: Ship-owners/Operators, of Panamanian Flagged Vessels, Class Societies and Recognized Organizations (RO's).

Subject: Code of Safety for Special Purpose Ships, 2008, as Amended

Reference:

- a) **Resolution MSC.266(84) as amended, adopted by Resolution No. 106-OMI-126-DGMM**
 - b) **Resolution A.534(13) as amended, adopted by Resolution No. 106-OMI-148-DGMM**
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Purpose

1. This Merchant Marine Circular is to inform all ship-owners/operators, Class and Recognized Organizations regarding the adoption of the Code of Safety for Special Purpose Ships, as amended.

Application

2. Through Resolution No. 106-OMI-126-DGMM of April 01, 2014 this Administration have adopted the SPS Code 2008 (Resolution MSC.266(84) as amended) and Resolution No. 106-OMI-148-DGMM of March 13, 2015 this Administration have adopted the SPS Code 1983 (Resolution A.534(13) as amended), considering the necessity of the industry to implement an international standard of safety for special purpose ships.
3. The application of this Code will facilitate the operation of specialized types of ships with unusual design and operational characteristics that may differ from those of conventional merchant ships subject to the SOLAS Convention, since in virtue of the specialized nature of the work undertaken by these ships, special personnel are carried, who are neither crew members nor passengers as defined in the SOLAS Convention.
4. Based on SPS Code 2008 paragraph 1.2.1, this Administration decided that the provisions of this Code will be applied as far as reasonable and practicable to special purpose ships less than 500 gross tonnage.
5. Considering also that existing vessels may not comply the requirements of SPS Code 2008 this Administration agreed that special purpose ships constructed before 1 April 2014 but after 17 November 1983 will continue to apply the requirements of SPS Code 1983 and will make the appropriate arrangement to perform the required survey to certify the vessel during the next renewal survey of the statutory Certificates in order to comply as applicable with these requirements, in the meantime the current certificates issued to those vessels will remain valid until the appropriate inspection will be carried out.

<i>Prepared by: Translator</i>	<i>Revised by: Compliance and Enforcement Deputy Chief</i>	<i>Approved by: Compliance and Enforcement Chief</i>
<i>Control N°: F-RIN-04-01</i>	<i>Version: 03</i>	<i>Date: 06 July, 2011</i>
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6. In case of special purpose ships constructed before 17 November 1983, for which a Special Purpose Ships Safety Certificate has not been issued so far, this Administration will issue an appropriate statement of Acceptance in order to confirm that the ship is still doing the type of operations and carrying the numbers of personnel that the cargo ship safety certificate was issued for.
7. Notwithstanding the stated in paragraphs 5 and 6 above, in case of ships constructed before 1 April 2014 operating within jurisdictional waters of a country which accepts the ship maintain the current SOLAS Certificates instead of the Special Purpose Ship Safety Certificate, this Administration will agree that it will not be issued with Special Purpose Ship Safety Certificate and will issue the appropriate statement of Acceptance in order to confirm that the ship is still doing the type of operations and carrying the numbers of personnel that the cargo ship safety certificate was issued for.

Certificate

8. For facilitation the operation of special purpose ships, the Code provides for a certificate, called a Special Purpose Ship Safety Certificate, which should be issued to every special purpose ship. Where a special purpose ship is normally engaged on international voyages as defined in SOLAS it should, in addition, also carry SOLAS certificates, either:
 - .1 for passenger ship with a SOLAS Exemption Certificate ;or
 - .2 for a cargo ship with a SOLAS Exemption Certificate, where necessary,
 as this flag Administration deems appropriate.
9. The duration and validity of the certificate should be governed by the respective provisions for cargo ships in SOLAS.
10. It is important to mention that according to the Code when a ship which is not normally engaged as a special purpose ship and which undertakes an exceptional single voyage as a special purpose ship may be exempted by the Administration from the provisions of this Code, provided that it complies with safety requirements which in the opinion of the Administration are adequate for the voyage which is to be undertaken by the ship.
11. Form corresponding to the model of the Safety Certificate for Special Purpose Ships is given in the Annex to the SPS Code.
12. All Recognized Organizations duly approved to issue the certificates related to SOLAS Convention on behalf of the Republic of Panama, are authorized to issue a Special Purpose Ship Safety Certificate.

May, 2015 – amendment to paragraphs 2, 4, 5, 6 and new paragraph 7 added, also SPS initials added to paragraph 11.

October, 2014 – new paragraphs 4, 5 and 6 added.

April, 2014

Inquiries concerning the subject of this Circular or any request should be directed to:

Directorate General of Merchant Marine

Panama Maritime Authority

Phone: (507) 501-5033

Fax: (507) 501-5083

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