



**PANAMA MARITIME AUTHORITY**

*Directorate General of Merchant Marine*

*Office of the Department of Merchant Marine Circular No.103*

*Maritime Safety*

**To: Owners/Operators of Panamanian flag Vessels, Class Societies and Authorized Organizations**

**Subject: GMDSS equipment requirements**

Regarding the installation of GMDSS equipment on vessels or units that carry the Panamanian flag the following:

1. The Sea Areas are determined by the Contracting governments on land that can provide the Sea Area services. For this reason any vessel or unit that operates solely within the territorial waters of any given coastal state shall comply with the Coastal State requirements for the GMDSS equipment.
2. For vessels that engage in international trade along the coast, they shall determine what Sea Areas services are provided within their area of navigation so as to establish the GMDSS equipment needed. For this information you need to contact the NAVAREA coordinators or the Coastal States involved. They should be able to provide literature regarding this and probably a recommendation for the equipment. Please find attached a list of NAVAREA coordinators and a NAVAREA map.
3. In the case that a vessel trades along the coast and no Sea Area A1 or A2 services are provided, the vessel shall be fitted for Sea Area A3 equipment.
4. If a vessel or unit will be taken out of service within two years of 1 February 1999 the operator/owners can obtain an exemption for some requirements of GMDSS if they contact the administration prior to 1 February 1999. There is no guarantee of approval for any requests received after that date.
5. For special situations that may render the full application of SOLAS Chapter IV Regulations 7 to 11 unreasonable or unnecessary please contact our office via fax or email. Send your request with the following information:
  - a. vessel name,
  - b. call letters,
  - c. IMO number,
  - d. gross tonnage,
  - e. area of navigation,
  - f. Sea Area services provided within the area of navigation,
  - g. request (be specific regarding SOLAS regulations that the request is about),
  - h. SOLAS regulation on which the request is based on,
  - i. special conditions

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

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