



**PANAMA MARITIME AUTHORITY**

***Directorate General of Merchant Marine***

***Office of the Department Merchant Marine Circular No.104***

***Of Maritime Safety***

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

**Subject: GMDSS Radio Qualified Personnel on board Panamanian Flag Vessels Policy**

This Merchant Marine Circular replaces MMC No. 99

The Panama Maritime Authority implementing the requirements of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, as amended in 1995 (STCW 95) and Chapter IV of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea 1974 (SOLAS) prescribes the following mandatory minimum requirements.

1. From February 1, 1999 vessel's certified for GMDSS (Global Maritime Distress and Safety System) every watchstanding Deck Officer serving on Panama registered ships must be in possession of an appropriate Panamanian (GMDSS) radio operator's certificate; i.e., Restricted Operator's Certificate (ROC) or General Operator's Certificate (GOC).
  2. In order to ensure that the radio equipment required by Chapter IV of SOLAS, is properly maintained and meets the recommended functional requirements specified in regulation 4, and the recommended performance standards, this administration will require the following maintenance methods on board Panamanian vessels according to the area of navigation:
    1. Duplication of equipment
    2. Shore based maintenance
    3. At-sea electronic maintenance<sup>2</sup> capability
- 1 On ships engaged on voyages in sea areas A1 and A2, the availability shall be ensured by using one(1) of the above mentioned methods.
  - 1 On ships engaged on voyages in sea areas A3 and A4, the availability shall be ensured by using a combination of at least two (2) of the above mentioned methods.

The person designated to perform At-sea electronic maintenance capability could be one of the GMDSS operators on board the vessel, and is required to hold an appropriate certificate as referred to in STCW Code B-I/IV, or have equivalent at-sea electronic maintenance qualifications as specified by the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) Radio Regulations.

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