



# PANAMA MARITIME AUTHORITY

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## MERCHANT MARINE CIRCULAR MMC-220

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**To:** Ship-owners/Operators, Company Security Officers, Legal Representatives of Panamanian Flagged Vessels, Panamanian Merchant Marine Consulates and Recognized Organizations (ROs).

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**Subject:** Inclusion of Panama as Non-contracting Cooperating Member of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC)

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**Reference:** Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC)

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1. The purpose of this circular is to inform about the acceptance of Panama as Non-contracting Cooperating Member of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission.
2. The Commission determined the following general participatory rights for all CNM's:
  - i. All vessels will be equipped with Commission vessel monitoring system (VMS), which shall be operational at all times while the vessels are in the Convention Area.
  - ii. The CNMs identified provide assurances that they will comply with all requests from Commission Members for information and documentation to investigate cases of possible illegal fishing.
  - iii. In addition, unless otherwise specified, CNMs may fish in waters under the national jurisdiction of other CCMs, in accordance with appropriate bilateral arrangements. Such CNMs shall ensure vessels flying their flags comply with all provisions of the WCPF Convention and WCPFC CMMs. In addition, such CNM vessels will be placed on the WCPFC Record of Fishing Vessels (WCPFC RFV). CCMs shall ensure that CNM fishing activities that are conducted in waters under their national jurisdiction in accordance with bilateral arrangements are consistent with all relevant CMMs and provisions of the WCPF Convention. Renewal of CNM status by the Commission will be conditional on full compliance with national laws and regulations of any licensing CCM, all CMMs and provisions of the WCPF Convention. CCMs shall identify any violations by vessels flagged to a CNM and report on any investigations of such violations to the TCC.
3. Specifically for Panama, the Commission determined the following participatory rights:  
The participatory rights of Panama in the WCPO are limited to the provision of carrier and bunker vessels only.
4. Panama as Non-contracting Cooperating Member of the commission has now the right to include ships for the registry of fishing support vessels (carriers and bunkers) under its own flag instead of being nominated by a member of the commission.
5. As established in Law 44 of January 23, 2009 in article 37, #16 it corresponds to the Department of Planning and Integrated Management of the Aquatic Resources Authority of Panama (ARAP)

to conduct all the supervision with the Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMO) of which Panama may wish to be a member.

6. In this sense, enclosed are the contact numbers of the Aquatic Resources Authority of Panama (ARAP), which is in charge of receiving all applications for the registration of these ships in the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC):  
(507) 511-6000 / (507) 511-6052

**March, 2011**

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