



**REPUBLIC OF  
THE MARSHALL ISLANDS**

**MARITIME ADMINISTRATOR**

**Marine Guideline**

**No. 2-11-21**

**Jul/2023**

---

**TO: ALL SHIPOWNERS, OPERATORS, MASTERS AND OFFICERS OF  
MERCHANT SHIPS, AND RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATIONS**

**SUBJECT: Participation in the WMO Voluntary Observing Ships Scheme**

**Reference:** (a) **SOLAS**, *International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea*,  
Consolidated Edition 2020  
(b) **IMO Circular** [MSC.1/Circ.1293/Rev.1](#), *Participation in the WMO  
Voluntary Observing Ships Scheme*, issued 25 May 2018

**PURPOSE**

This Marine Guideline brings the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) Voluntary Observing Ships (VOS) scheme to the attention of shipowners, ship operators, ship managers, Masters, and crew.

**BACKGROUND**

Ship-based meteorological reports provide vital real-time feedback on ocean weather conditions to weather forecasters. They use the data to improve the quality of the forecasts and warnings issued through the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) for mariners at sea. One of the continuing major problems facing meteorology and oceanography is the scarcity of data from vast areas of the world's oceans (so-called data-sparse areas, for example, the polar regions).

**APPLICABILITY**

The Marine Guideline applies to all RMI-flagged vessels and crew.

## GUIDANCE

- 1.0 The Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) Maritime Administrator (the “Administrator”) encourages the participation of RMI-flagged vessels in the WMO observation program, in accordance with the provisions of SOLAS regulation V/5.2.4.
- 2.0 The National Meteorological Services (NMS) in various ports of SOLAS Contracting Governments can supply RMI-flagged vessels with free of charge calibrated marine meteorological instruments that are needed to undertake weather observing at sea.
  - 2.1 On request, the Port Meteorological Officer (PMO) will arrange to provide the ship with the necessary software and instrumentation such as a barometer, barograph, psychrometer, and a suitable apparatus for measuring sea temperature.
  - 2.2 User-friendly automatic weather stations reporting systems can also be supplied. They are able to take, record, and transmit the surface synoptic observations at main standard times (meaning four times per day).
- 3.0 The PMO or NMS will provide free training to the crew for participating in the scheme. The training includes insight and practical avoidance measures for situations encountered at sea, such as tropical storms and hurricanes. There are no charges to the ship or the operator.
- 4.0 A ship, or entire fleet, can be enrolled in the WMO VOS scheme by contacting the nearest PMO or NMS. They will coordinate delivery and installation arrangements. Regional PMO contact information is available from the [WMO](#)<sup>1</sup>, [OceanOPS](#)<sup>2</sup> or [Global Ocean Observing system](#) websites.

---

1. See [WMO No.9 Volume D](#) - Information for Shipping, Chapter 4 - Focal Point Contact Information, Part B - Port Meteorological Offices.

2. IMO Circular [MSC.1/Circ.1293/Rev.1](#) refers to ‘[JCOMMOPS](#)’. This has been rebranded to ‘OceanOPS’.