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

SUBJECT: National Safety Requirements for Miscellaneous Vessels.

References: (a) Marine Notice 5-034-1, Safety Inspections of Marshall Islands Ships (b) Marine Notice 5-034-2, Alternate Safety Inspection Program

PURPOSE:

There has been some confusion as to what certificates should be carried by those vessels which are not covered by the international conventions. This notice clarifies the National safety requirements of the Republic of the Marshall Islands and standardizes the procedures for the issuance of a “National Cargo Ship Document of Compliance” to certain categories of vessels: This Notice supersedes Rev. 8/06.

APPLICABILITY:

Vessels not expressly covered by the Safety of Life at Sea Convention 1974, should generally comply with SOLAS ’74 and all subsequent amendments to the extent that this is practical. In accordance with SOLAS ’74, Regulation 1 and 3 of Chapter 1, these vessels are:

Reg. 1 (a) vessels not engaged on international voyages;
Reg. 3 (ii) cargo ships of less than 500 gross tons;
(iii) ships not propelled by mechanical means;
(iv) wooden ships of primitive build;
(v) pleasure yachts not engaged in trade; and
(vi) fishing vessels.

Vessels not expressly covered by the International Convention on Load Lines (LL ’66), as amended, should generally conform to its requirements to the extent that this is practical. Pleasure yachts, fishing vessels, vessels of less than 24 meters in length, vessels of less than 150 gross tons, and vessels not engaged on international voyages are not covered by the Load Line Convention.

This Marine Notice does not apply to vessels or units provided for under the Mobile Offshore Drilling Unit (MODU) Codes or The Code of Safety for Special Purpose Ships, [IMO Resolution A.534(13)].

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REQUIREMENTS:

1.0 **Qualifying Vessels**

1.1 In order to clarify and standardize procedures, a “National Cargo Ship Document of Compliance” will be issued to the following categories of Marshall Islands vessels:

(a) all vessels of less than 24 meters but not under 12 meters in length;
(b) all vessels of less than 500 gross tons but not under 20 net tons; and
(c) all fishing vessels not engaged in Marshall Islands Coastal Trade.

1.2 A vessel not otherwise falling within sub-paragraphs (a), (b), or (c) above, but exclusively engaged in the Marshall Islands fishery or the Marshall Islands coastwise trade, may be issued a “National Cargo Ship Document of Compliance” upon request to the relevant Classification Society.

2.0 **Certification**

2.1 The National Cargo Ship Document of Compliance will be issued, and all surveys necessary for issuance and maintenance of the validity of the certificate will be carried out by the vessel’s Classification Society.

2.2 The title of the Certificate may be modified to reflect the type of vessel to which it is issued.

2.3 The Certificate will be issued to all vessels upon completion of an Initial Survey which is carried out concurrently with the surveys required for registration.

2.4 The Certificate will be valid for five (5) years, running concurrently with the five (5) year Classification period between special surveys, but will be subject to annual verification surveys by the Classification Society’s surveyors, who will endorse the Certificate accordingly. The Annual Survey should be conducted between three (3) months before and three (3) months after the anniversary of the Initial Survey date.

2.5 A copy of the Certificate is to be sent to Technical Services in Reston, Virginia, USA for filing and verification.

3.0 **Initial and Annual Safety Inspections**

3.1 The Safety Inspection procedures applicable to all Marshall Islands flag vessels shall be followed as defined in Marine Notices 5-034-1 and 5-034-2.
4.0 Surveys

4.1 The content of the survey is to be sufficient for the surveyor to verify that the vessel and its equipment are in a satisfactory condition for the intended service.

4.2 The survey should include an inspection of fire fighting equipment, lifesaving equipment and an operational check of the radio equipment.

4.3 Verification of hull integrity, watertight closing arrangements and machinery status will be covered by maintenance in Class.

5.0 Modifications and Alterations

5.1 No modifications or alterations will be required in existing approved arrangements. However, where the provision of equipment falls below generally accepted international standards or normal good shipbuilding practice, the Administration, in consultation with the relevant Classification Society and the owner, will specify the number and/or type of units of equipment to be carried.

6.0 Radio Equipment

6.1 All certificated vessels must comply with the requirements of Chapter IV, Regulation 4, of SOLAS ’74, and with the ’78, ’81 and ’83 amendments, unless alternative arrangements are approved by the Administration.

6.2 Cargo Ships over 300 gross tons will, in addition to the National Cargo Ship Document of Compliance, be required to comply with the requirements of the new Chapter IV (GMDSS) as stated in the 1988 Amendments and Chapter V/19.1 for LRIT.

7.0 International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) code

Vessels not subject to mandatory compliance with the ISPS Code may do so voluntarily. It is highly recommended that cargo ships, including commercial yachts, 300 or more but less than 500 gross tonnage (ITC 69), voluntarily comply. While still voluntary for such vessels, mandatory compliance must be anticipated in the very near future. It also must be understood that certain coastal States may impose special security requirements on these vessels. Such is the case in United States territorial waters wherein foreign commercial vessels greater than 100 gross registered tons not subject to SOLAS are subject to Part 104 of the USCG Final Rules. Such vessels should consider adopting the appropriate Alternative Security Plan provided by groups representing specialized marine sectors within the US.

8.0 Load Lines

8.1 All certificated vessels must comply with the requirements of the International Convention on Load Lines, 1966, as amended, with the sole exception of the requirements for marking and freeboard computation, unless alternative arrangements are approved by the Administration.
8.2 New vessels of 24 meters or more in length and existing vessels of 150 gross tons or over, engaged on any international voyage, in addition to the National Cargo Ship Document of Compliance will be required to carry an International Load Line Certificate.

9.0 **MARPOL**

All vessels will be required to comply with the requirements of MARPOL 73/78.

10.0 **Yachts**

10.1 Pleasure yachts are included, together with fishing vessels, barges, sailing vessels and wooden ships, within the term “vessels” as used in Section 1 of this Notice.

10.2 Pleasure yachts not engaged in trade do not require SOLAS Certificates regardless of size. However, owners of pleasure yachts may, on voluntary basis, apply for full SOLAS-equivalent certification and, provided the required surveys are conducted, the relevant Classification Society will issue an appropriate SOLAS equivalent certificate.

10.3 Nevertheless, it should be noted that pleasure yachts should be in compliance with classification rule requirements, and with the provisions of the Load Line and SOLAS Conventions as far as reasonable and practicable, including the radio and radar requirements and the 1972 Collision Regulations as amended; and, if over 400 gross tons, yachts should also be in compliance with the provisions of MARPOL 73/78, as applicable.

11.0 **Offshore Units**

All FSO (Floating, Storage and Off-Loading), FPSO (Floating, Production, Storage, and Off-Loading) and FPU (Floating Offshore Production Unit) vessels will be issued a “Marshall Islands Mobile Offshore Unit Document of Compliance.” Category II requirements in MI-293 will be applied (see Marine Notice 2-011-9).