

# Republic of the Marshall Islands

## MARITIME ADMINISTRATOR

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### MARINE SAFETY ADVISORY NO. 06-17

**To: Owners/Operators, Masters, Nautical Inspectors, Recognized Organizations**

**Subject: VESSEL REPORTING SYSTEMS TO ASSIST SEARCH AND RESCUE**

**Date: 20 February 2017**

This Marine Safety Advisory (MSA) supersedes MSA 11-16, and is being reissued by the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) Maritime Administrator (the “Administrator”) to encourage Masters and owners to participate and cooperate in Vessel Reporting Systems (VRS) to assist in search and rescue operations. This information is being issued as an MSA because participation in VRS is not a requirement, but highly recommended. Administrator marine investigations have revealed that participation in such reporting systems plays a critical role in saving both life and property at sea.

#### **Atlantic Merchant Vessel Emergency Reporting**

The Automated Mutual-Assistance Vessel Rescue system, originally known as Atlantic Merchant Vessel Emergency Reporting System (AMVER), plays an important role in the safety and well-being of seafarers and ships worldwide.

AMVER is a voluntary ship reporting system that is operated by the United States Coast Guard (USCG) to promote safety of life and property at sea, at no cost to participants. Through its volunteers, AMVER works swiftly to provide Search and Rescue (SAR) authorities with accurate information on the positions and conditions of vessels near a reported distress on demand.

Any merchant vessel anywhere around the world, on a voyage of more than 24 hours, can join AMVER. Please note that international participation is voluntary and membership can be sought regardless of the vessel’s flag of registry, the nationality of the owner or company and ports of call. Information voluntarily provided by vessels to AMVER is kept strictly confidential and is protected by the USCG. It will be released only for safety purposes, which usually entails either listing latitude and longitude or providing a graphical display of vessels near the position of a reported distress. This information can then be used by SAR to coordinate the efforts of merchant vessels and other resources to provide the best and most timely assistance possible to distressed vessels or persons at sea.

To register to participate in AMVER, please complete the online [SAR\(Q\) form](#). Additional details of the AMVER program and procedures may be obtained from [www.amver.com](http://www.amver.com).

## **Regional Reporting Systems**

Many nations, including but not limited to: Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hong Kong, Iceland, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Malta, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Poland, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Ukraine, United Kingdom, and Vietnam have regional SAR programs, reporting systems, and rescue contacts.

The International Maritime Organization's (IMO) Global Integrated Shipping Information System (GISIS) houses a [SAR module](#) that contains the Global SAR Plan, including the availability of SAR Services, based on information provided by IMO Member States. The Canadian government has created a SAR Contacts database that can also be accessed [online](#).

The Administrator encourages RMI-flagged vessels to become more familiar with SAR programs to promote the safety and well-being of those at sea.