

Commonwealth of Dominica



Office of the Maritime Administrator

TO: ALL SHIPOWNERS, OPERATORS, MASTERS AND OFFICERS OF MERCHANT SHIPS, INCLUDING MOBILE OFFSHORE DRILLING UNITS, MARINE PERSONNEL, TRAINING INSTITUTIONS, FACILITIES AND TRAINING PROVIDERS, MANNING AGENCIES, AND RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATIONS

SUBJECT: Harmonized System of Surveys and Certification

REFERENCE:

- (a) International Conference on Harmonized System of Surveys and Certification, 1988 (HSSC)
- (b) SOLAS Protocol 1988
- (c) Load Line Protocol 1988
- (d) MEPC Resolution MEPC 39(29)
- (e) IMO Assembly Resolution A.948(23)

PURPOSE: This Circular provides Administration policy and guidelines on the implementation of the Harmonized System of Surveys and Certification (HSSC) with respect to ships registered in Dominica.

APPLICABILITY: The 1988 SOLAS and Load Line Protocols and the related amendments to MARPOL 73/78 regarding HSSC entered into force on 03 February 2000. On 5 December 2003 IMO Assembly adopted the resolution A.948(23) on *Revised survey guidelines under the HSSC*. Owners of ships, including self-propelled Mobile Offshore Drilling Units, entitled to fly the Flag of Dominica and Classification Societies recognized by the Commonwealth of Dominica should take note of these guidelines.

ENCLOSURES: IMO Resolution A.948(23) *Revised survey guidelines under the harmonized system of surveys and certification*

DISCUSSION:**1.0 HSSC**

1.1 The International Conference on Harmonized System of Surveys and Certification (HSSC) 1988 adopted the SOLAS Protocol 1988 and the Load Lines Protocol, 1988. By adopting these protocols, the HSSC Conference introduced the harmonized system of surveys and certification under the 1974 SOLAS Convention and the 1966 Load Line Convention. HSSC simplifies the survey and

certification requirements and reduces the burden on Administrations, owners/operators of ships, and crews.

2.0 IMPLEMENTATION

- 2.1 HSSC allows the harmonization of SOLAS, Load Line, and MARPOL surveys and certification and provides for a five-year period of validity for all statutory certificates. Under the harmonized system, the Safety Radio and Safety Equipment Certificates are also valid for a five-year period. The Passenger Ship Safety Certificate (PSSC), however, continues to be valid for one year. Harmonized certification requires annual endorsements with respect to statutory surveys (i.e. Safety Radio, Safety Equipment, Load Line, and MARPOL surveys).
- 2.2 The harmonized surveys should be scheduled for a time, location, and port where fire and boat drills can be conducted and cargo operations do not hinder the carrying out of surveys. In no case can the expiration date of the HSSC certificate be later than the expiry date of the Cargo Ship Safety Construction Certificate.
- 2.3 Vessel owners or operators should ensure that arrangements for any preparation, repairs and/or servicing (e.g. servicing of liferafts and fire fighting equipment, hull gaugings, staging in cargo tanks, radio or radar equipment technicians, etc.) have been made in advance so that authorized service personnel, or other specialist or personnel needed to carry out required tests or inspections will be available for the harmonized surveys. The vessel's officers and crew should be available and ready to carry out the drills and assist in the surveys as required by the attending Classification Society surveyor.
- 2.4 It should be understood that HSSC does not change the existing statutory requirements for surveys. The statutory certificates are required to be endorsed annually for each of the relevant surveys, with an intermediate survey being carried out at the second or third annual surveys equivalent to a current renewal or periodical survey. Questions regarding implementation of the HSSC, scheduling and the carrying out of the surveys should be referred to the vessel's Classification Society.
- 2.5 The Classification Societies authorized to act on behalf of Commonwealth of Dominica Maritime Administration are to follow the guidelines provided in resolution A.948(23) while conducting initial, annual, intermediate, periodical, renewal and additional surveys onboard the Dominica flag vessels.

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ENCLOSURE: IMO Resolution A.948(23) Revised survey guidelines under the harmonized system of surveys and certification