Commonwealth of Dominica

Office of the Maritime Administrator

TO: **ALL SHIPOWNERS, OPERATORS, MASTERS AND OFFICERS OF MERCHANT SHIPS, AND AUTHORIZED CLASSIFICATION SOCIETIES**

SUBJECT: **PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR A SHIP SECURITY ALERT SYSTEM**

REFERENCE: **a) SOLAS Chapter XI-2, Regulation 6**

b) IMO Resolution MSC.136(76)

PURPOSE: Pursuant to the provisions of the new chapter XI-2 of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), 1974, as amended, and the requirements of regulation XI-2/6, that all ships shall be provided with a ship security alert system, which, for security reasons, is necessary on board for initiating and transmitting a ship-to-shore security alert to a competent authority designated by the Administration, this Circular is issued in order to ensure that a ship security alert system provided in compliance with relevant international instruments in force on or after 1 July 2004 conforms to performance standards not inferior to those specified in IMO Resolution MSC.136(76), adopted on 11 December 2002.

APPLICABILITY: The following types of the Commonwealth of Dominica flag vessels engaged on international voyages:

- passenger ships, including high-speed passenger craft;
- cargo ships, including high-speed craft, of 500 gross tonnage and upwards; and
- mobile offshore drilling units.

Inquiries concerning the subject of this Circular should be directed to the Deputy Maritime Administrator
Commonwealth of Dominica 32 Washington Street, Fairhaven, MA 02719 USA
registration@dominica-registry.com

REQUIREMENTS:

1 Introduction

1.1 The ship security alert system is provided to a ship for the purpose of transmitting a security alert to the shore to indicate to a competent authority that the security of the ship is under threat or has been compromised. It comprises a minimum of two activation points, one of which is on the navigation bridge. These initiate the transmission of a ship security alert. The system is intended to allow a covert activation to be made which alerts the competent authority ashore and does not raise an alarm on board ship nor alert other ships.

1.2 Upon receiving the alert, the competent authority notifies the authority responsible for maritime security within its Commonwealth of Dominica Maritime Administration, the coastal State(s) in whose vicinity the ship is presently operating, or other Contracting Governments.

1.3 The procedures for the use of the ship security alert system and the location of the activation points are given in the ship security plan agreed by the Maritime Administrator.

1.4 The ship security alert system may utilise the radio installation provided for compliance with chapter IV of the SOLAS Convention, other radio systems provided for general communications or dedicated radio systems.

2 Carriage requirements

All Dominica flag vessels, to which this Circular applies, shall be provided with a ship security alert system, as follows:

.1 ships constructed on or after 1 July 2004;

.2 passenger ships, including high-speed passenger craft, constructed before 1 July 2004, not later than the first survey of the radio installation after 1 July 2004;

.3 oil tankers, chemical tankers, gas carriers, bulk carriers and cargo high-speed craft, of 500 gross tonnage and upwards constructed before 1 July 2004, not later than the first survey of the radio installation after 1 July 2004; and

.4 other cargo ships of 500 gross tonnage and upward and mobile offshore drilling units constructed before 1 July 2004, not later than the first survey of the radio installation after 1 July 2006.

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3 General

3.1 In addition to complying with the general requirements set out in resolution A.694(17), the ship security alert system should comply with the following performance standards.

3.2 The radio system used for the ship security alert system should comply with relevant international standards.

4 Power supply

Where the ship security alert system is powered from the ship's main source of electrical power, it should, in addition, be possible to operate the system from another appropriate source of power.

5 Activation points

Activation points should be capable of being used on the navigation bridge and in other locations. They should be protected against inadvertent operation. It should not be necessary for the user to remove seals or to break any lid or cover in order to operate any control.

6 Operation

6.1 The activation points should operate a radio system such that transmission of the security alert does not require any adjustment of the radio system, i.e. tuning of channels, setting of modes or menu options. Operation of the activation point should not cause any alarm or indication to be raised on the ship.

6.2 The operation of the ship security alert system should not impair the functionality of the GMDSS installation.

7 Transmission of security alerts

7.1 In all cases, transmission initiated by security alert system activation points should include a unique code/identifier indicating that the alert has not been generated in accordance with GMDSS distress procedures. The transmission should include the ship identity and current position. The transmission should be addressed to a shore station and should not be addressed to ship stations.

7.2 The ship security alert system, when activated, should continue the ship security alert until deactivated and/or reset.

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8 Testing

The ship security alert system should be capable of being tested.

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