

Merchant Marine Circular

Panama Maritime Authority
General Directorate of Merchant Marine
Control and Compliance Department

MERCHANT MARINE CIRCULAR MMC-184

To: Owners/Operators, Masters of Panama flagged Vessels, Recognized Organizations.

Subject: Casualty Investigations of Panama flagged vessels.

Reference: Resolution No. 106-135-DGMM of September 9th, 2013.
Resolution No. 106-OMI-164-DGMM of December 24, 2015 adopted Resolution MSC.255(84) of May 16th, 2008.
*¹ Resolution MSC.257(84) of May 16th, 2008 and MSC/Circ.953; MEPC/Circ.372 of December 14, 2000.

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1. This Merchant Marine Circular replaces the MMC-31, MMC-32, MMC-33 and MMC-37.
 2. The purpose of this Merchant Marine Circular is to set forth current rules and regulations on Marine Accident Investigations.
 3. The **Chapter I, Regulation 21** of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) establishes that “each Administration undertakes to conduct an investigation of any casualty occurring to any of its ships” and that “each Contracting Government undertakes to supply the Organization with pertinent information concerning the findings of such investigations”.
 4. Through Resolution No. 106-135-DGMM of September 9th, 2013, Panama has approved the Rules and Regulations pertaining to marine accident investigations.
 5. These Rules and Regulations establish that the Maritime Affairs Investigation Department is the Special Unit in charge of investigating marine accidents and incidents which may increase the risk for human life or for the marine environment on board all Panamanian registered vessels.
 6. The Rules and Regulations set forth that the purpose of all investigations to be carried out by the Maritime Affairs Investigation Department shall not be to practice criminal, civil, or administrative actions; for which they will only be subject for the purposes established in the Code for the Investigation of Marine Casualties and Incidents adopted by the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

¹ Recommendatory



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7. These Rules and Regulations empower the Maritime Affairs Investigation Department to confiscate or withdraw, in the course of their investigations, the Log Book, equipment, licenses, documents, books, registries or vessel parts, with the whole purpose of executing a proper investigation.
8. Also, it empowers the Maritime Affairs Investigation Department to request all personnel on board a Panamanian registered vessel or any foreign registered vessels which are within the territorial waters of the Republic of Panama, operators, or individuals directly or indirectly involved in a marine accident or incident, so that they testify or be interrogated, either verbally or in writing, in reference to the marine accident or incident. All Masters, property owners, or operators of vessels which have suffered a marine accident or incident, shall maintain and keep all entries or materials relevant to the voyage, and must cooperate with the investigation.
9. All Recognized Organizations, as well as all marine safety inspectors directly or indirectly involved in a marine accident or incident, may be called to render statements, and they must provide all the entries and documents which shall be required to carry out the investigation of the marine accident or incident.
10. In the event owners, operators, masters, crew members and officers, or recognized organizations, do not comply with their duties and obligations to duly cooperate with the investigation or to inform whenever a marine accident or incident occurs, will be subject to the sanctions imposed by Law.
11. The General Directorate of Merchant Marine shall establish the necessary procedures or mechanisms to carry out adequate investigations of marine accidents or incidents, including the application of administrative restrictions against Panamanian registered vessels which become involved in a marine accident or incident.
12. In the event of marine accidents or incidents involving Panamanian registered vessels or marine accidents or incidents involving foreign vessel within Panamanian jurisdictional waters, owners/operators or masters shall immediately give notice thereof to the Maritime Affairs Investigation Department.
13. The contact details of the Maritime Affairs Investigation Department are as follows:

Telephone numbers: +507 501-5087 / 5039 / 4238

E-mail: casualty@amp.gob.pa



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August, 2020 - This Merchant Marine Circular replaces the MMC-31, MMC-32, MMC-33 and MMC-37 was added, paragraph #1.

Change in the resolution number by which Panama has approved the Rules and Regulations pertaining to marine accident investigations, paragraph #4.

Wording was changed from "Marine Accident Investigation Department" to "Maritime Affairs Investigation Department", paragraphs #5, 6, 7, 8, 12 and 13.

Fax number was deleted, paragraph #13.

September, 2008.

Inquiries concerning the subject of this Merchant Marine Circular or any other request should be forward to:

Maritime Affairs Investigation Department
General Directorate of Merchant Marine
Panama Maritime Authority

Phone: (507) 501-5087 / 5039 / 4238

E-mail: casualty@amp.gob.pa

Website: <https://panamashipregistry.com/circulars/>