



# TUVALU SHIP REGISTRY

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## MARINE CIRCULAR

### MC-22/2012/1

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**FOR:** Ship Owners, Ship Managers, Ship Operators, Ship Masters, Ship Officers, Classification Societies

**SUBJECT: IMO UNIQUE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER SCHEME FOR SHIP / COMPANY / REGISTERED OWNER**

#### **DEFINITIONS:**

The following abbreviations stand for:

- “CSR” – Continuous Synopsis Record (ISPS Code)
- “DOC” – Document of Compliance (ISM Code)
- “GT” – Gross Tonnage in accordance to ITC 69
- “IMO” – International Maritime Organization
- “ISM Code” – International Management Code for the Safe Operation of Ships and for Pollution Prevention
- “ISPS Code” – International Ship and Port Facility Security Code implemented through chapter XI-2 Special measures to enhance maritime security in SOLAS.
- “ISSC” – International Ship Security Certificates as required by the ISPS Code
- “ITC 69” – International Convention on the Tonnage Measurement of Ships, 1969
- “PSC” – Port State Control
- “RO” – Recognized Organization as defined by IMO Resolution A.789(19)
- “RSO” – Recognized Security Organization
- “SAR” – Search and Rescue
- “SMC” – Safety Management Certificate as required by the ISM Code
- “SOLAS” – International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), 1974, as amended

The following terms shall mean:

- “Administration” – Tuvalu Ship Registry;
- “Company” – the owner of the ship or any other organization or person such as the Manager, or the Bareboat Charterer, who has assumed the responsibility for operation of the ship from the ship owner and who on assuming such responsibility has agreed to do so in writing. This definition is the same as that found in the ISM Code and is applied in like manner;
- “Registered Owner” – the owner specified on a ship’s Certificate of Registry issued by the Administration.

#### **PURPOSE:**

To provide a guideline for ship owners / ship managers who may be new to the IMO Unique Identification Number Scheme.

The IMO ship identification number scheme was introduced in 1987 as a measure aimed at enhancing maritime safety, and pollution prevention and to facilitate the prevention of maritime fraud and assigns a permanent seven-digit number to each ship for identification purposes. This number would remain unchanged upon transfer of the ship to other flag(s) and would be inserted in the ship’s certificates.

On the other hand, the IMO Unique Company and Registered Owner Identification Number Scheme was introduced in 2004 for the same reasons as when the scheme was introduced for ships and assigns a permanent number for identification purposes to each Company and/or Registered Owner managing ships engaged on international voyages.

## **REFERENCES:**

- (a) IMO Resolution A.1117(30) – IMO ship identification number scheme, 18 December 2017
- (b) IMO Circular Letter No.1886/Rev.7 – Implementation of resolution A.1117(30) – IMO ship identification number scheme, 28 November 2022
- (c) IMO Resolution MSC.160(78) – Adoption of the IMO unique company and registered owner identification number scheme, 20 May 2004
- (d) IMO Circular Letter No.2554/Rev.3 – Implementation of IMO Unique Company and Registered Owner Identification Number Scheme (resolution MSC.160(78)), 4 March 2014
- (e) SOLAS

## **CONTENTS:**

### **1. Application to Ship**

- 1.1. The IMO ship identification number (identification number) is made of the three letters "IMO" in front of the seven digits of the Lloyd's Register (LR) Number and shipbuilders/shipowners are encouraged to provide details of all new orders to S&P Global Market Intelligence (formerly known as IHS Markit, Maritime & Trade (IHS M&T) or IHS Fairplay (IHS-F)) to facilitate the assignment of identification numbers at the earliest opportunity.
- 1.2. Following the adoption of a new SOLAS chapter XI by the 1994 SOLAS Conference (in particular regulation 3 thereof, which corresponds now to regulation XI-1/3), the implementation of the scheme became mandatory for all passenger ships of 100 GT and upwards and to all cargo ships of 300 GT and upwards as of 1 January 1996.
- 1.3. It is also required that passenger ships of less than 100 gross tonnage, high speed passenger craft and mobile offshore drilling units covered by SOLAS regulation V/19-1 with regard to the long-range identification and tracking of ships, which entered into force on 1 January 2008, should have IMO numbers.
- 1.4. In support of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in the context of the Global Record of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels and Supply Vessels and the need for the identification numbers, by adoption of resolutions A.1078(28) and A.1117(30), the IMO identification number scheme was revised to allow its application to sea-going, self-propelled ships of 100 gross tonnage and above, including fishing vessels of steel and non-steel hull construction; passenger ships of less than 100 gross tonnage, high speed passenger craft and mobile offshore drilling units covered by SOLAS regulation V/19-1; and all motorized inboard fishing vessels of less than 100 gross tonnage down to a size limit of 12 metres in length overall (LOA), authorized to operate outside waters under the national jurisdiction of the flag State.

### **2. Application to Company**

- 2.1. All Companies and Registered Owners managing ships of 500 GT and above engaged on international voyages are required to be assigned with an IMO number under the scheme which is in full force and effect since 1 January 2009. Exceptions to this requirement include:
  - 2.1.1. cargo ships of less than 500 gross tonnage (GT);
  - 2.1.2. ships not propelled by mechanical means;
  - 2.1.3. pleasure yachts not engaged in trade (i.e., private yachts); and
  - 2.1.4. fishing vessels.

- 2.2. This number remains unchanged upon transfer of a Company and/or Registered Owner's ship to another flag and will be included on a Company's DOC, the ship's SMC, ISSC and CSR certificates wherever the Company and/or Registered Owner's name should appear.
- 2.3. This Number remains unchanged, but unused, in the event a Company and/or Registered Owner sells, or otherwise disposes, of its ship(s) and does not begin operating new ship(s).
- 2.4. This Number remains unchanged in the event the Company and/or Registered Owner, after having sold or otherwise disposed of its ships, renews ship management at a future time.

### **3. Applying for Numbers**

Requests can be submitted on the following website <http://imonumbers.ihs.com> or sent to S&P Global Market Intelligence, together with the information on the individual ships concerned, using the form set out in the annex of IMO Circular Letter No.1886/Rev.7, at the following address:

S&P Global Market Intelligence  
5th Floor  
Kingsgate  
62 High Street  
Redhill,  
Surrey RH1 1SG  
United Kingdom  
Email: [ship.imo@ihsmarkit.com](mailto:ship.imo@ihsmarkit.com)  
Tel: +44 (0)1334 328300

Should there be any difficulty in contacting S&P Global Market Intelligence, requests (including information on the ship concerned as detailed above) should be addressed to IMO at the following address [IMOnumbers@imo.org](mailto:IMOnumbers@imo.org).

Yours sincerely,  
Deputy Registrar  
Tuvalu Ship Registry