

# Merchant Marine Circular

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

## MERCHANT MARINE CIRCULAR MMC-381

- To:** Ship-owners/Operators, Company Designated Person Ashore (DPA), and Legal Representatives of Panama Flagged Vessels.
- Subject:** U.S. Pre-ports arrival checklist for Panama flagged vessels.
- Reference:** Law N°. 7 of October 27, 1977, SOLAS, Chapter I, Part B, Rule 11, A y C - USCG - Targeting of Foreign Vessels for Port State Control (PSC) Examination - Serial CVC-WI-021(1).

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1. The purpose of this Merchant Marine Circular is to implement additional assessment requirements to decrease the detention numbers of vessels calling in the United States of America (U.S) ports that may subject to Port State Control (PSC) inspections.
  2. As you are aware the Coast Guard implemented an initiative to identify high-quality ships and flags, and provide incentives to encourage quality operations. This initiative is called QUALSHIP 21, and through this initiative high-quality vessels should be recognized and rewarded for their commitment to safety and quality.
  3. As Administration one of our main objectives is to be part of the QUALSHIP 21 program and obtain the associated benefits to Panama Flagged vessels. For this reason, a checklist has drawn up ([see ANNEX](#)), to assist Ship-Owners, operators, technical managers, Designated Persons Ashore (DPA) and vessel Master's to find weak items that can results as a ground for detention through Port State Control Inspections by the U.S. Coast Guard.
  4. The checklist must be sent ninety-six hours (96hrs) before the vessel arrives to U.S ports, to the following email address: [psc@amp.gob.pa](mailto:psc@amp.gob.pa). For voyages with lasts less than 96 hours (96hrs), the checklist must be sent at least twenty-four hours (24hrs) before arrival at port.



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The use of this checklist is compulsory for all the Panamanian vessels prior to arrivals U.S. ports, and shall be signed by the vessel Masters and/or company Designated Persons Ashore (DPA). The omission of this requirement may lead to administrative sanctions for to the vessel Master, and/or Chief Engineer and/or to the vessel company as well.

5. If an extraordinariness issues, such as equipment failures or any others situations that cannot be resolve on board of the vessel immediately; Ship-Owners, operators, technical managers, DPA or vessel's Master, shall immediately coordinate the effective corrective actions, together with the vessel Recognized Organization (R.O.) and Segumar Offices. At the same time, PSC Authority shall be informed as requested by regulation 11 "Maintenance of conditions after survey", SOLAS Chapter I.
6. For more details regarding the USCG PSC targeting process, please refer to USCG - Targeting of Foreign Vessels for Port State Control (PSC) Examination - Serial [CVC-WI-021\(1\)](#), enclosed to this document and the USCG PSC web page in the following link:

<https://www.dco.uscg.mil/Our-Organization/Assistant-Commandant-for-Prevention-Policy-CG-5P/Inspections-Compliance-CG-5PC-/Commercial-Vessel-Compliance/Foreign-Offshore-Compliance-Division/PortStateControl/R>

**May, 2021** – Changed document in the hyperlink of paragraph 3 (see ANNEX).

**November, 2020** – Changed document in the hyperlink of paragraph 3 - In paragraph 5 of the Check list a new point 6 is included.

**June, 2020.**

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

Navigation and Maritime Safety Department  
Directorate General of Merchant Marine  
Panama Maritime Authority

Phone: (507) 501-5033

E-mail: [psc@amp.gob.pa](mailto:psc@amp.gob.pa)

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

**PANAMA MARITIME AUTHORITY  
GENERAL DIRECTORATE OF MERCHANT MARINE**



Pre-arrival checklist for Panama flagged vessels.

Vessel Name \_\_\_\_\_ IMO Number \_\_\_\_\_  
 Previous Port \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Departure \_\_\_\_\_  
 Port of Arrival \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Arrival \_\_\_\_\_  
 Inoperative (out of service) equipment if any \_\_\_\_\_

	YES	NO
1 Has your ship been detained in the last 12 months?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 If the answer is yes, have all deficiencies been rectified already?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 If the answer is no, please inform which elements are still pending and if require any authorization letter from us.	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 40px;"></div>	
4 Specify any condition of class, class notation and/or Conditional Certificate (if any)		

5 Are the following items working and maintained in proper condition per the applicable international regulations

No.	Area	Items to check and verify before port arrival	YES	NO	COMMENTS
1	Document Check	Vessel certificates (on board and duly endorsed, Statement of Compliance for IMO DCS reporting, SEEMP PART II)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2		Crew certificates (not expired and proper endorsements)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3		ISM previous deficiencies and non-conformities have duly followed up and closed. Flag State and Company informed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4		ISM internal and external audits held as required and reports are available on board	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5		SMS on board address cyber risk management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6		Risk assessments records are available	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
7		Personnel onboard meet the requirements of MSMC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
8		Work and rest hours records updated as required	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
9		CSO and DPA contact details are available	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
10		Continuous Synopsis Record (CSR) updated	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
11		Seafarers Employment Agreements (SEA) valid and signed by all interested parties	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
12		ISPS Security level set correctly as per Flag State and Port Authorities requirement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
13		Ballast water records are up to date and ballast plan is available	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
14		Safety (fire, abandon, enclosed space, etc.) and Security	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
15		Manuals (e.g. stability, SOPEP, damage control plan, etc.) available in latest version	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

No.	Area	Items to check and verify before port arrival	YES	NO	COMMENTS
16	Fire protection system check	Log books of firefighting equipment and Lifesaving appliances (LSA) is up to date			
17		Fire detectors, smoke detectors and heat detectors (with no temporary covers), and the crew must be familiarized with the procedures and equipment for test			
18		Fire dampers, Mechanical Ventilations (working and in good condition)			
19		Fixed fire extinguishing system (CO2 system connected and fully operational with no clogged or corroded nozzles)			
20		Fire doors not permanently locked, self-closing device in good order (gas tight, no worn packing, etc.)			
21		Fire extinguishers (Adequate cylinder pressure, also those located in machine room spaces, service certificate valid)			
22		Fire main system in good condition (hoses and isolation valve)			
23		Fire pump and its pipes in good order (Good pressure on deck and remote means of operation working correctly)			
24		Quick closing valves in good order (Remote control devices)			
25		Muster lists and Fire Plans (updated and posted)			
26		All personnel familiar with signals, muster station and duties in case of emergencies			
27	Emergency escapes free of obstructions				
28	Life Saving Appliances check	Operational readiness of lifesaving appliances (engines, davits and falls ready to use)			
29		Rescue boats and lifeboats are in good condition (Lifeboat windows have good visibility, steering, lights, compass, propeller protection, etc.)			
30		Lifejackets and immersion suits are in good condition and available for the total number of crewmembers on board			
31		Inflatable life rafts (hydraulic release unit, embarkation ladder, required lifeboat inventory as required, current service period, no expired equipment, etc.)			
32		Launching and recovery arrangements for survival craft in good condition (NOT Wasted/Holed davit or defective winch brake)			
33	On deck verification	Gangway ladder and moorings (working and arranged properly)			
34		ISPS Access control procedures duly complied			
35		Outside decks (clean and well illuminated)			
36		Pilot transfer arrangements			
37		Garbage record book up to date and all areas well maintained			
38		Accommodations clean, in order and no door hooks in place			

No.	Area	Items to check and verify before port arrival	YES	NO	COMMENTS
39	On deck verification	Ventilators, air pipes, casings in good condition			
40		Weather tight doors are in good condition and close properly			
41		Hatch covers in good condition			
42		Emergency source of power - Emergency Generator (able to start automatically and manually)			
43		Emergency lighting (batteries and switches in good condition)			
44		International shore connection and standard discharge connection in good condition			
45		General lighting in good condition (no burned bulbs)			
46	Bridge check	Nautical Publications (latest editions on board)			
47		Lights, shapes and signals working properly and available			
48		Radio equipment, GMDSS, VHF/DSC, MF/HF, EPIRB, AIS, VDR, Radar Transponder, Echo sounder, Speed log, NAVTEX, MMSI number, etc. in good working order			
49		Voyage data recorder (VDR/S-VDR) and ship security alarm system (SSAS) operational, tested and not showing system errors			
50		LRIT working satisfactorily (conformance test on board)			
51		Nautical charts and ECDIS updated (ECDIS was checked for last ENC updates, PPI cross checked in ECDIS, ECA entries positions cross checked, passage plan, etc.)			
52	Deck Logbook (duly updated and accurate, indicating the working language, entries for ECA (changeover), entries for sewage discharge, etc.)				
53	Engine Room check	Oil Record Book (duly updated and accurate)			
54		Steering gear in good order			
55		Air pipes and ventilators in good order			
56		Cleanliness of machinery spaces			
57		Oil water separator / oil filtering equipment (engine crew has to be able to test it). If PSCOs discover unapproved modifications to the oily water separator piping system, criminal prosecution of the vessel and its crew may result.			
58		Jacketed piping system for high pressure fuel lines			
59		Oil Content Meter (engine crew has to be able to test it)			
60		Avoid imprudent amount of bilge water, accumulation of oil, fuel leaks, oil soaked lagging in the engine room space			
61		Alarm system of bilge high level working well			
62		Oil mist detector alarm working well			
63		Sewage treatment plant (operative, blower working well, cleaning agents, etc.)			
64	Remotely operated shutoff valves (ROSOV)				

No.	Area	Items to check and verify before port arrival	YES	NO	COMMENTS
65	Engine Room check	Tankers Only	Inert Gas system operational		
66			Overboard discharge monitoring and control equipment ODME working well		
67			Audio-visual alarms of high and high-high alarms		
68			Fixed gas detection system		
69	MLC	Sanitary facilities working well and clean			
70		Heating, air conditioning and ventilation in good order			
71		Hospital is clean and in order, medical chest is complete			
72		MLC Insurance certificates are valid			
73		Personal protective equipment (PPE)			
74		Stores available for the intended voyage and well kept (temperature and food segregation)			
75		Seafarers Employment Agreements (SEA) comply with collective bargain agreement (if applicable)			

- 6 This Administration invites companies and Masters, to report Flag State and Port Authorities in case there are any pending, malfunctioning or missing items which require additional verification; in case you require a technical assistance from our side e.g. authorization letter from the Flag State please also inform us. Our main objective is to reduce the likelihood of a Detention by the PSC.
- 7 This checklist must be sent 96 hours before the arrival to the below contact information. For voyages that last less than 96 hours, said document must be sent at least 24 hours before arrival in port.

**The failure to comply or omission of this documental requirement may lead to administrative sanctions for the vessel Master and/or Chief Engineer that may result on suspension and/or revocation of licenses, endorsements and/or certificates. Vessel Company may be sanction in equal proportion.**

I certify that I have verified, prior to the port arrival, that all items on this list are as expressed above in good working order, except the ones specifically mentioned otherwise;

Master Signature: _____	Vessel Stamp	DPA Signature: _____
Master Name: _____		DPA Name: _____
Date: _____		Email: _____
		24/7 Phone: _____
		Date: _____

***This Check-list and any inquiries concerning the subject of this Circular or any other request should be directed to:***  
***Port State Control Section (Panama Office)***  
***Navigation and Maritime Safety Department***  
***Directorate General of Merchant Marine***  
***Panama Maritime Authority***  
[psc@amp.gob.pa](mailto:psc@amp.gob.pa)  
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