



TUVALU SHIP REGISTRY

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MARINE CIRCULAR

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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
- “IHSF” – HIS Fairplay
- “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
- “LRF” – Lloyd’s Register Fairplay
- “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 were 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 Circular Letter No.1886/Rev.3
- (b) IMO Resolution A.600(15)
- (c) IMO Resolution MSC.160(78)
- (d) IMO Circular Letter No.2554
- (e) SOLAS Chapter XI-1, Regulations 3, 3-1 and 5
- (f) SOLAS Chapter IX, Regulation 1 (ISM Code)

APPLICATION:

The IMO ship identification number is made of the three letters "IMO" followed by the seven-digit number assigned to all ships by IHSF (formerly known as LRF) when constructed. This is a unique seven digit number that is assigned to propelled, sea-going merchant ships of 100 GT and above upon keel laying with the exception of the following:

- Vessels solely engaged in fishing
- Ships without mechanical means of propulsion
- Pleasure yachts
- Ships engaged on special service (e.g. lightships, SAR vessels)
- Hopper barges
- Hydrofoils, air cushion vehicles
- Floating docks and structures classified in a similar manner
- Ships of war and troopships
- Wooden ships

In December 2002, a modification to SOLAS Regulation XI-1/3 was made to require ships' identification numbers to be permanently marked in a visible place either on the ship's hull or superstructure. Passenger ships should carry the marking on a horizontal surface visible from the air. Ships should also be marked with their ID numbers internally. This number is never reassigned to another vessel and is shown on the ship's certificates.

Similarly, all Companies and Registered Owners managing ships of 100 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. 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. 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). 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.

CONTENTS:

1. Procedures

- 1.1. IHSF maintains a full history audit trail of changes to Ship, Company and/or Registered Owner information, with the date of each change recorded.
- 1.2. When Companies and/or Registered Owners merge, IHSF assigns the Number of the larger Company and/or Registered Owner to the new amalgamated entity, while the Number of the

smaller entity is frozen and not re-used. IHSF maintains the history of Companies and/or Registered Owners of ships on its database.

- 1.3. The IMO Unique Company and Registered Owner Identification Number Scheme are managed in parallel with the IMO Ship Identification Number Scheme without charge by IHSF. The Number(s) are not, however, the same as the IMO Ship Identification Number.
- 1.4. New Companies and/or Registered Owners managing ships covered by the Scheme are required to apply for a Number when their ship is registered with the Administration. During registration, the Administration will expect the Company and Registered Owner to provide the Number assigned to it.
- 1.5. The Administration may contact IHSF to confirm the Numbers provided by the Company and Registered Owner. The Administrator will also be routinely updating its database with that of IHSF.

2. Applying for Numbers

- 2.1. The Number for the Ship, Company and Registered Owner can be obtained by contacting IHSF at the following url: <https://imonumbers.lrfairplay.com/>. New users will need to first register for a user account to access the IMO numbers database and apply for IMO numbers either on-line or using the forms.
- 2.2. The forms may be downloaded at <https://imonumbers.lrfairplay.com/> or our website at www.tvship.com (under "Downloads / Forms") :
 - Form IMO Number (Ship)
 - Form IMO Number (Company)
 - Form IMO Number (Registered Owner)
- 2.3. IHSF will accept both paper and electronic request forms (refer to 2.2) for Ships, Companies or Registered Owners who have not previously been assigned a Number. Companies or Registered Owners also may use the appropriate form to update their information. IHSF will confirm updated Company information with the Administration.
- 2.4. IHSF will also accept both paper and electronic request forms (refer to 2.2) from ROs that undertake SMC shipboard and DOC company audits, and from RSOs that undertake ISSC shipboard audits, for Companies who have not previously been assigned a Number.

3. Website Resources

- 3.1. IHSF's website (<https://imonumbers.lrfairplay.com/>) allows Administrations to look up Numbers as well as communicate correct Company details on existing records. The Administration, however, assumes no responsibility or duty to examine, correct, change, alter, or modify information contained on the IHSF free website, or to notify IHSF of incorrect information contained on the website.
- 3.2. This website is also available to Companies and Registered Owners, who may use it to complete the numbering requirements on the CSR (resolution A.959(23)). Alternatively, these Numbers are available on the Equasis free public website (www.equasis.org).
- 3.3. These websites are also accessible to and used by PSC authorities to verify ship documentation. The Administration will not accept or be held responsible for mistakes or errors in the information on these websites. It will therefore be very important that Companies and Registered Owners provide both IHSF and the Administration with accurate matching information.

Yours sincerely,
Deputy Registrar
Tuvalu Ship Registry