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MARINE CIRCULAR

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FOR: Ship Owners, Ship Managers, Ship Operators, Ship Masters, Ship Officers, Classification Societies, Flag State Inspectors

SUBJECT: REQUIREMENTS FOR OFFSHORE SUPPLY VESSELS (OSVs) CARRYING PERSONS IN ADDITION TO CREW

DEFINITIONS:

The following abbreviations stand for:

- "COLREGS" – Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, 1972
- "GA" – General Arrangement
- "GT" – Gross Tonnage
- "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 on special measures to enhance maritime security in SOLAS
- "LSA" – Life-saving Appliances
- "MARPOL" – International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships 1973, as modified by the Protocol of 1978 and 1997, as amended
- "MODU Code" – Code for the Construction and Equipment of Mobile Offshore Drilling Units
- "OSV" – Offshore Supply Vessel
- "RO" – Recognized Organization as defined by IMO Resolution A.789(19)
- "RSO" – Recognized Security Organization as defined by the ISPS Code
- "SOC" – Statement of Compliance
- "SOLAS" – International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), 1974, as amended
- "SPS" – Special Purpose Ships defined as a mechanically self-propelled ship which by reason of its function carries on board more than 12 special personnel.
- "SPS 2008" – Code of Safety for Special Purpose Ships, 2008, Annex to IMO Resolution MSC.266(84)

The following terms shall mean:

- "Administration" – Tuvalu Ship Registry;
- "Crew" – refers to all persons carried on board the ship to provide navigation and maintenance of the ship, its machinery, systems and arrangements essential for propulsion and safe navigation or to provide services for other persons on board. It does not include those persons identified as special personnel;
- "Crew Boat" – refers to a vessel which is primarily used for the transportation of personnel to, from and between offshore installations. These vessels are typically arranged to also have capacity to deliver limited amounts of stores, materials, or equipment;

- “Gross Tonnage” – the measurement of the internal volume of spaces within the vessel as defined by the International Convention on Tonnage Measurement of Ships, 1969 (ITC);
- “Offshore installation” – refers to a marine structure located at an offshore site. The term includes: fixed production platforms; floating production platforms; floating storage units; any unit certificated as a mobile offshore drilling unit (MODU) or mobile offshore unit (MOU); accommodation units; floating production, storage and operations units (FPSO, FSO, FSU or MOSU); and maintenance units;
- “Offshore Supply Vessel (OSV)” – refers to a vessel which is used for the transportation of stores, materials, equipment or personnel to, from and between offshore installations. These vessels are sometimes categorized as offshore support vessels. For the purposes of this circular, the term also includes Crew Boats;
- “Offshore worker” – refers to an individual transported aboard an OSV and employed in a phase of exploration, exploitation, or production of offshore mineral or energy resources on or at an offshore installation. The term does not include the master or a member of the crew engaged in the regular marine operations of the vessel;
- “Passenger” – refers to every person other than the master and the members of the crew or other persons employed or engaged in any capacity on board a ship;
- “Persons in addition to crew” – may include, but are not limited to, passengers, family members of crew, maintenance/repair workers, representatives of the owners/operators, or regulatory/class surveyors who are onboard for the duration or part of a voyage;
- “Special personnel” – refers to all persons who are not crewmembers or passengers and children under one (1) year of age and who are carried on board in connection with the special purpose of that ship or because of special work being carried out aboard that ship.

PURPOSE:

In accordance with SOLAS definitions, a vessel of any GT carrying more than 12 passengers, on an international voyage is considered to be a passenger ship. In this regard, OSVs (including crew boats) that often carry more than 12 offshore workers (normally consisting of offshore installation crewmembers and marine service providers) are therefore required to comply with SOLAS passenger vessel regulations as the offshore workers on board are considered passengers since they do not perform the functions of a crew.

However, in most circumstances these vessels differ greatly from the typical SOLAS passenger ship in the sense that they are relatively small coastal vessels serving in support of energy exploration and production in offshore oil and gas fields around the world. They are used to transport a myriad of equipment, supplies, stores, industrial fluids, and personnel from nearby shore base facilities and the offshore oil and offshore gas installations, and vice versa. The extra persons carried are not typical passengers but primarily industrial personnel, trained for the marine environment and experienced in emergency and evacuation procedures.

This Administration recognizes these differences and this circular seeks to establish an equivalent standard to the SOLAS passenger ship requirements for OSVs registered with Tuvalu.

APPLICATION:

This circular applies to OSVs of 500 GT and above that:

- are self-propelled by machinery; and
- regularly transports persons, who are not crew members of the crew, which may include passengers, family members of crew, maintenance/repair workers, offshore crew and marine service providers performing functions in support of exploration, exploitation, or production of offshore energy resources, ship owner representatives, class surveyors etc.

This circular does not apply to:

- passenger ships covered by SOLAS engaged in passenger trade;
- vessels or units certified under the SPS 2008 or MODU Code; or
- vessels below 500 GT certified under the Tuvalu Safety Regulations for non-SOLAS vessels of more than 12 metres in Length, Edition 1 July 2011

REFERENCES:

- (a) IMO Resolution A.863(20), Code of Safe Practice for the Carriage of Cargoes and Persons by Offshore Supply Vessels (OSV Code), as Amended
- (b) IMO Resolution MSC.235(82), Guidelines for the Design and Construction of Offshore Supply Vessels, 2006
- (c) IMO Resolution A.673(16), Guidelines for the Transport and Handling of Limited Amounts of Hazardous and Noxious Liquid Substances in Bulk on Offshore Support Vessels, as Amended
- (d) Marine Circular MC-6/2012/1, Guidance for Special Purpose Ships (SPS)
- (e) Tuvalu Safety Regulations for non-SOLAS vessels of more than 12 metres in Length, Edition 1 July 2011

CONTENTS:

1. General Requirements

- 1.1. A shipowner operating OSV(s) that carries up to 12 persons (excluding crew) may do so without any approval from the Administration unless the total number of persons on board exceed the number allowed on the vessel's Safety Equipment Certificate, in which case the Administration has to be approached for an authorization.
- 1.2. OSVs intending to carry more than 12 persons (excluding crew) shall request for an approval from the Administration and such request shall be sent to the Administration at technical@tvship.com and shall contain the following:
 - 1.2.1. Number of extra persons (including their purpose and duration) required on board;
 - 1.2.2. GA plan;
 - 1.2.3. LSA capacity and arrangement of all LSA;
 - 1.2.4. Scope of operations including area of operations;
 - 1.2.5. Recommendations from RO;
 - 1.2.6. Restrictions; and
 - 1.2.7. Proposed manning and capacity to carry the extra persons
- 1.3. If the request is approved, the vessel's RO will be authorized to conduct a survey to verify that the conditions of the approval are met and subsequently issue a Statement of Compliance (SOC) in accordance to this circular which is in addition to any other required statutory certification. The SOC shall serve as evidence that the vessel is in compliance with a standard determined by the Administration to be equivalent to SOLAS as allowed by SOLAS Regulation I/5.

- 1.4. The minimum crew size, including number of certified lifeboat-men, shall be adjusted as deemed necessary based on the total number of persons carried and total number of life boats.

2. Survey & Certification Requirements

- 2.1. Surveys necessary for the issuance and maintenance of the validity of a Statement of Compliance (SOC), or equivalent, shall be carried out by the vessel's RO. Where SOLAS statutory certification (e.g. Safety Equipment, Safety Radio, Safety Construction) apply, the surveys and certification shall be harmonised.
- 2.2. The scope and content of the surveys shall be sufficient for the surveyor to verify that the vessel and its equipment are satisfactory for the carriage of the extra persons on board.
- 2.3. The survey shall include an inspection of fire-fighting equipment, life-saving equipment and an operational check of the radio equipment, as well as verification of hull integrity, watertight closing arrangements and machinery status which will be covered by maintaining classification.
- 2.4. The SOC shall be issued only upon completion of an Initial Survey.
- 2.5. The SOC shall be issued for a period of validity of five (5) years, running concurrently with the five (5) year classification period between Special Surveys, but shall be subject to annual verification surveys by the RO's surveyors, who shall endorse the SOC accordingly. The Annual Survey shall be conducted within three (3) months before and three (3) months after each anniversary date of the Initial or Renewal Survey.
- 2.6. For OSVs carrying more than 12 persons (excluding crew), the SOC shall be annotated with any restrictions / conditions that the Administration may deem appropriate.

3. Modifications and Alterations

No modifications or alterations are required of existing approved arrangements. However, where the provision of equipment falls below generally acceptable international standards, then the Administration, in consultation with the RO and the shipowner, shall specify the number and/or type of units of equipment to be installed or replaced where deemed necessary.

4. Radio Equipment Requirements

All OSVs requesting to carry more than 12 persons (excluding crew) shall comply with the requirements of Chapter IV, Regulation 4, of SOLAS, unless alternative arrangements are approved by the Administration and OSVs over 300 GT shall, in addition to the SOC, be required to comply with the requirements of SOLAS Chapter IV (GMDSS).

5. ISM and ISPS Code Requirements

The ISM and ISPS Code shall be implemented on all OSVs requesting approval to carry more than 12 persons (excluding crew). Evidence of compliance must be provided by a RO.

6. Load Lines Requirements

All OSVs of 24 meters or more in length, requesting to carry more than 12 persons (excluding crew), engaged on any international voyage shall carry an International Load Line Certificate in addition to the SOC.

7. Stability Requirements

- 7.1. The intact and damage stability, and the subdivision of OSVs requesting to carry more than 12 persons (excluding crew) **shall** comply with the requirements of the Intact Stability Code.
- 7.2. For OSVs carrying more than 60 persons on board (including crew), the Administration may consider applying the stability and subdivision requirements of Chapter 2 of the SPS 2008 (IMO Resolution MSC.266(84)).

8. MARPOL Requirements

All OSVs shall fully comply with the requirements of MARPOL.

9. Life-saving Requirements

- 9.1. All OSVs shall comply with the relevant provisions for cargo ships contained in Chapter III of SOLAS, and all lifesaving appliances and arrangements shall be in accordance with Chapter III of SOLAS and the LSA Code.
- 9.2. A lifejacket shall be provided for each person on board. Additional lifejackets shall also be provided to each personnel at the watch locations.
- 9.3. Immersion suits shall be provided for each person on board. Additional immersion suits shall also be provided to each personnel at the watch locations. However, an exemption from the carriage of immersion suits may be granted by the Administration if the OSV is operating exclusively between 30° North and 30° South latitudes.
- 9.4. Lifeboats with sufficient capacity to accommodate the total persons on board must be fitted on OSVs greater than 85 m in length, or any OSV carrying more than 60 total persons.
- 9.5. Life Rafts:
 - 9.5.1. OSVs must carry one (1) or more life rafts with an aggregate capacity that will accommodate the total number of persons on board.
 - 9.5.2. Life rafts must be stowed in a position providing for easy side-to-side transfer at a single open deck level, failing which additional life rafts must be provided to bring the total capacity available on each side to at least 100 percent of the total number of persons on board.
- 9.6. At least one (1) SOLAS rescue boat shall be fitted and an additional rescue boat may be required depending on total persons carried, route, and type of vessel.

10. Fire Protection Requirements

The fire protection systems shall be in compliance with SPS 2008.

11. Machinery and Electrical Systems Requirements

The machinery and electrical systems shall be in compliance with SPS 2008.

12. Accommodation Requirements

For voyages in excess of 12 hours, suitable overnight accommodations shall be provided for each person on board. In cases where temporary or portable accommodations are employed, they shall be to the same standard, or equivalent standard of construction, structure, heating and ventilation, egress, water/weather tightness, safety systems and sanitary facilities, as provided on the vessel for its intended service.

13. Navigation Lights

13.1. Due to the special construction and purpose of OSVs, it is typically difficult for the arrangement of the navigation lights to be in compliance with COLREGS especially with regards to:

13.1.1. location of the sternlight, aft anchor light, and towing light (Rule 21 (c) & (d), 30 (a)(ii));

13.1.2. second mast-light (Rule 23 (a)(ii), Annex I Paragraphs 2 (a),(b), & 3 (a)); and

13.1.3. vertical spacing of lights (Annex I Paragraph 2 (i)).

13.2. In such cases, the Administration shall authorise the RO to exempt these OSV(s) from the specific COLREGS provisions above subject to the following:

13.2.1. all alternative measures regarding placement of the stern/anchor lights as high and far aft as possible has been implemented; and

13.2.2. proper illumination of the aft working deck at night while at anchor or underway is provided.

14. Transport and Handling of Limited Amounts of Hazardous and Noxious Liquid Substances in Bulk

All OSVs carrying noxious liquid substances in bulk are subject to the requirements of Annex II of MARPOL, as amended. The guidelines contained in IMO Resolution MSC.235(82) and IMO Resolution A.673(16), Guidelines for the Transport and shall be complied with, and the OSV(s) shall be issued with a Certificate of Fitness by the RO indicating the cargoes regulated by the Guidelines that the vessel is permitted to carry.

15. Transport and Transfer of Persons By Vessels Other Than Passenger Ships

15.1. All transport and transfer of extra persons (excluding crew) must be conducted in accordance with the following:

15.1.1. only under suitable weather conditions;

15.1.2. all persons to be transported must receive a safety briefing as stated in Section 15.2 below;

15.1.3. a manned standby vessel must be available at all times during offshore personnel transfer operations;

15.1.4. all watertight doors in subdivision bulkheads shall be kept closed at all times when the vessel is at sea, except when they are used for transit; and

15.1.5. all personnel transport and transfer operations must be conducted in accordance with the provisions of IMO Assembly Resolution A.863(20).

15.2. Before a vessel gets underway on a voyage transporting offshore/industrial personnel, the master shall ensure that these extra persons (excluding crew) are aware of the:

- 15.2.1. emergency and evacuation procedures;
- 15.2.2. locations of emergency exits and of embarkation areas for survival craft;
- 15.2.3. locations of lifejackets and immersion suits;
- 15.2.4. proper method or methods of donning and adjusting lifejackets and immersion suits of the type or types carried on the vessel;
- 15.2.5. locations of the instruction placards for lifejackets and other LSA as well as any placards of emergency instructions;
- 15.2.6. hazardous conditions that might require the donning of lifejackets and immersion suits;
- 15.2.7. types and locations of any other LSA carried on the vessel;
- 15.2.8. identity and location of survival craft to which assigned;
- 15.2.9. hazardous materials on the vessel (if any); and
- 15.2.10. possible conditions or circumstances that constitute a risk to safety.

15.3. Except under emergency conditions, transport voyages are always subject to favourable sea conditions.

Yours sincerely,

Deputy Registrar
Tuvalu Ship Registry