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MARINE CIRCULAR

MC-14/2011/1

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

SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL MARITIME DANGEROUS GOODS CODE & MEDICAL OXYGEN CYLINDER REQUIREMENTS

DEFINITIONS:

The following abbreviations stand for:

- “BC Code” - Code of Safe Practice for Solid Bulk Cargoes
- “IBC Code” - International Code for the Construction and Equipment of Ships Carrying Dangerous Chemicals in Bulk
- “IGC Code” - International Code for the Construction and Equipment of Ships Carrying Liquefied Gases in Bulk
- “IMDG Code” - International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code
- “IMO” - International Maritime Organization
- “IMSBC Code” - International Maritime Solid Bulk Cargoes Code
- “MFAG” - Medical First Aid Guide For Use In Accidents Involving Dangerous Goods
- “MSC” - Maritime Safety Committee (IMO)
- “SOLAS” - International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), 1974, as amended
- “UN” - United Nations

The term “Administration” shall mean Tuvalu Ship Registry

PURPOSE:

This marine circular provides the IMDG Code requirements for Tuvalu flagged vessels and also provides Tuvalu’s policy pertaining to medical oxygen cylinders.

REFERENCES:

- (a) SOLAS, as amended
- (b) IMDG Code, as amended
- (c) IMDG Code Supplement 2024 Edition, as amended
- (d) IMSBC Code, as amended
- (e) IGC Code, as amended

APPLICATION:

The provisions contained in the IMDG Code are applicable to:

- (a) all ships to which SOLAS applies and which are carrying dangerous goods (as defined in SOLAS Chap VII Part A Regulation 1.2). Dangerous goods means the substances, materials and articles covered by the IMDG Code.
- (b) all ships, irrespective of type and size, carrying substances, material or articles identified in the IMDG Code as marine pollutants. Marine pollutants mean substances which are subject to the provisions of

Annex III (Regulations for the Prevention of Pollution by Harmful Substances Carried by Sea in Packaged Form) of MARPOL 73/78, as amended.

CONTENTS:

The IMDG Code, 2024 Edition (including Amendment 42-24), which came into force on 1 January 2026, includes revisions to various sections of the Code and is mandatory from 1 January 2026. The IMDG Code Supplement, 2024 Edition renders obsolete the previous 2022 edition.

1. General Requirements

- 1.1. Dangerous goods and marine pollutants shall be carried and shipped in accordance with the IMDG Code, as amended.
- 1.2. The IMDG Code is legally treated as a mandatory instrument under Chapter VII of SOLAS. However, certain provisions of the Code remain recommendatory and should be treated as such. These recommendatory provisions are contained in IMDG Code, Chapter 1.1 and are as follows:
 - Paragraph 1.1.1.8 (Notification of infringements);
 - Paragraphs 1.3.1.4 to 1.3.1.7 (Training);
 - Chapter 1.4 (Security provision) except 1.4.1.1, which is mandatory;
 - Section 2.1.0 of chapter 2.1 (class 1-explosives, introductory notes);
 - Section 2.3.3 of chapter 2.3 (Determination of flashpoint);
 - Columns (15) and (17) of the Dangerous Goods List in Chapter 3.2;
 - The segregation flow chart and example in the annex to chapter 7.2;
 - Section 5.4.5 of Chapter 5.4 (multimodal Dangerous Goods Form), insofar as the layout of the form is concerned;
 - Chapter 7.8 (Special provisions in the event of an incident and fire precautions involving dangerous goods);
 - Section 7.9.3 (Contact information for the main designated national competent authorities); and
 - Appendix B.
- 1.3. Compliance with all relevant requirements of SOLAS, Chapter II-2-Construction-fire protection, fire detection and fire extinction, as amended, is required.

2. Carriage of Publications

The latest version (electronic or hard copy) of the IMDG Code (Volume 1, Volume 2 and the Supplement) shall be carried on board all Tuvalu ships to which the IMDG Code applies.

3. Medical Oxygen Cylinders

- 3.1. The MFAG refers to the substances, material and articles covered by the IMDG Code, and the materials covered by Appendix 1 of the IMSBC Code for cargoes identified as being in Group B (cargoes which possess a chemical hazard). Section 1, para 1.7 of the IMSBC Code provides full definitions for cargo Groups A, B, and C.
- 3.2. Ships that fall under Column A or B of the MFAG Appendix 14 (IMDG Code) – List of Equipment, are required to carry a minimum of 44 liters/200 bar oxygen as follows:
 - one (1) 40 litre/200 bar medical oxygen cylinder located in the ship's hospital, assembled for direct use, equipped with one (1) flowmeter unit (two (2) ports) for supplying oxygen for two (2) persons simultaneously; and
 - one (1) complete portable set, ready for use, with a 2 litre/200 bar medical oxygen cylinder and a spare cylinder (also 2 litre/200 bar).

- 3.3. The single 40 litre/200 bar medical oxygen cylinder may be substituted with either two (2) 20 litre/200 bar cylinders or four (4) 10 litre/200 bar cylinders, provided the equipment / flowmeter units are arranged to supply oxygen to two (2) persons simultaneously.
- 3.4. The cylinders are to be hydrostatically tested every five (5) years, or at an interval specified by the manufacturer, whichever occurs sooner.
- 3.5. The contents of the cylinders are to be checked and changed as required according to manufacturer's requirements, or every (3) years, whichever earlier.
- 3.6. The entire system is to be inspected annually by a competent person in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.
- 3.7. It would be acceptable for a vessel which has been issued with a valid Document of Compliance for Dangerous Goods not to carry the medical oxygen cylinders while the vessel does not actually load, carry or discharge any such dangerous goods. Under these circumstances however, the shipboard SMS shall include provisions which ensure that the cylinders/system will be provided onboard before the vessel commences any of the above operations with dangerous goods.
- 3.8. The Administration interprets MFAG is being applicable to all vessels carrying cargoes which have a UN number. It is noted that the introduction to the MFAG states that it should be used in conjunction with the information provided in the IMDG Code, the IMSBC Code, the Emergency Procedures for Ships Carrying Dangerous Goods, IBC Code and IGC Code.
- 3.9. The revised IGC Code, which was adopted by IMO Resolution MSC.370(93) and entered into force on 1 January 2016 for new ships, refers to the MFAG in para 14.2.2 making it mandatory for gas carriers. Due to the revised text, the Administration considers that it is the intention of IMO to also apply the medical oxygen carriage requirements of the MFAG to gas and chemical carriers.
- 3.10. The IGC Code applies to ships whose keels are laid, or which are at a similar stage of construction where:
- construction identifiable with the ship begins; and
 - assembly of that ship has commenced, comprising at least 50 tonnes or 1% of the estimated mass of all structural material, whichever is less,
- on or after 1 July 2016.
- 3.11. In view of above section 3.10, compliance with the requirements on Medical Oxygen Cylinders shall apply to NEW and EXISTING gas and chemical carriers.

Yours sincerely,

Deputy Registrar
Tuvalu Ship Registry