

Merchant Marine Circular

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

MERCHANT MARINE CIRCULAR MMC-171

To: Ship-owner/Operators, Company Security Officers, Legal Representatives of Panamanian Flagged Vessels, Panamanian Merchant Marine Consulates and Recognized Organization (RO's).

Subject: Annual Safety Inspection Program.

Reference: Law No. 57, August 6, 2008.
Law No. 39, July 8, 1976.
Law No. 45, October 9, 1979.
Law No. 30, September 17, 1980.
Executive Decree No. 56, October 8, 1976.
Resolution No. 106-138-DGMM, September 10, 2013.
Resolution No. 106-137-DGMM, September 10, 2013.
Resolution No. 106-25-DGMM, April 16, 2015.
Resolution No. 106-39-DGMM, May 8, 2017.
Resolution No. 106-38-DGMM, May 8, 2017.
Resolution No. 106-36-DGMM, April 25, 2017.

1. This Merchant Marine Circular compiles the **MMC-20**.

1. **Purpose:**

1.1. The purpose of this Merchant Marine Circular is to formally inform all relevant parties about the Annual Safety Inspection Program and its requirements established by this Administration. Additionally, it provides the opportunity to inquire about the availability and status of the annual safety inspection for each vessel.

2. **Application:**

2.1. All vessels sailing under the Panamanian flag in foreign service and dedicated to the international commerce and other commercial activities shall be subject to an annual safety inspection, in order to determine whether it complies with the National and International Laws and Regulations currently in force.



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2.2. Panamanian Flag vessels under foreign Bareboat Charter (Charter Out) are not required to carry out Annual Safety Inspections.

3. General conditions

3.1. The Annual Safety Inspection of a Panamanian vessel shall be systematically categorized into the following distinct types to ensure comprehensive compliance with regulatory standards:

5.1.1 Initial Inspection: All new vessels entering the registry, whether newly constructed or newly registered, are granted a window period of three (3) months within which to complete their initial Annual Safety Inspection, unless otherwise specified by conditions established by the Monitoring Section at the time of the vessel's flagging.

5.1.2 Annual inspection: An annual inspection must be conducted on each anniversary date subsequent to the vessel's most recent inspection, ensuring continued compliance with all applicable safety standards and regulations.

5.1.3 Special Inspection: All panamanian vessels shall be subject to special inspections whenever circumstances merit this, in accordance with the provisions, instructions, and authorizations granted by the Administration.

4. Annual Safety Inspection Status:

4.1. The current status of the vessel's Annual Safety Inspections can be accessed directly online via the following website: <https://amp.digitaledge.net/vessels>, alternatively, inquiries can be made via email to asi@amp.gob.pa. Requests for inspections should also be submitted through these channels to obtain authorization. The Ship Status Online for Annual Safety Inspections will display the following options:

4.1.1 Inspected: Vessels with a valid inspection in less than 12 months (authorization should not be requested to the ASI Section).

4.2.1 Under inspection: An inspector has a valid authorization (authorization already granted by the ASI Section).

4.3.1 Available: Last inspection is expired; never has been inspected; inspector has an expired authorization (In these cases, the authorization should be requested to the ASI Section).



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5. Requirements

- 5.1. A vessel may be inspected during the period between nine (9) months and fifteen (15) months from its last inspection, being those authorized prior to twelve (12) months past the last inspection, only to the Inspectors employed directly by the Panama Maritime Authority and International SEGUMAR offices.
- 5.2. As our main purpose of the Annual Safety Inspection is to ensure the safety at sea, prevention of human injury or loss of life, and avoidance of damage to the environment, in particular to the marine environment and to property, all by carrying out an on-site inspection, making drills and reviewing the actual conditions of the vessels, this administration does not allow any type of remote inspection.
- 5.3. If an inspection authorization remains unfulfilled for more than 15 days from its issuance, it will automatically be canceled by our system.
- 5.4. The Inspections shall only be requested to the owner(s)/operator(s) or by a duly authorized inspector (all parties can find the updated list of inspectors at <https://panamashipregistry.com/maritime-services/asi-surveyors-list/>) or through their Companies Representing Flag Inspectors (MMC-374 or MMN-05/2022).
- 5.5. All inspection requests will undergo evaluation by the Flag State Section, which will determine if the request meets the requirements. Additionally, the Flag State Section has the authority to request supplementary information, as a prerequisite to ensure proper procedural adherence during inspections.

6. Responsibilities:

6.1. Inspectors:

- 9.1.1 The Flag inspector must always show his ID card issued by the Flag State Section.
- 9.1.2 The inspector must communicate with ship-owner/operator/master of vessel before going onboard and determine any necessary detail for the inspection.
- 9.1.3 If an inspection is more than 25 miles from the inspector's assigned port it will require some travel (either by land, air or sea), the inspector shall not travel until it is agreed with the ship-owner/operator/master that travel expenses will be honored or that travel arrangements will be made.



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9.1.4 The inspector must request the inspection no less than seven (7) days before a vessel's ETA (estimated time of arrival).

9.1.5 Under no circumstances should the same person that surveyed a vessel for issuance of statutory certificates also conduct its Annual Safety Inspection, while those certificates are valid. In the same way, the inspector that carries out an annual safety inspection shall not carry out surveys for statutory certificates within the yearly validity of the inspection.

9.1.6 The inspector is required to send the final report to the operator via email, assisting the automated system, to ensure confirmation of receipt by the operator.

9.1.7 Under no circumstances shall the inspector conduct an inspection without proper authorization from the Administration.

6.2. Operators:

6.2.1 For all the owner(s)/operator(s), charterers and others responsible for the operation of one or more vessels sailing under the Panamanian flag, as well as their agents or representatives, and the Master of such vessels shall be under obligation to admit the Flag Inspector on board, duly authorized by the Administration, cooperate with them and allow them to fully carry out the inspection.

6.2.2 In the event that deficiencies are identified during the inspection, the operator must adhere to MMC-201, which outlines the corrective measures for deficiencies identified during the ASI.

6.2.3 The owner(s)/operator(s) are obligated to notify the inspector of any issues or concerns regarding the vessel prior to the inspection to ensure thorough assessment and appropriate action.

7. Extensions:

7.1. In case of facing difficulties to complete the annual safety inspection, an ASI extension can be granted after the evaluation by the Flag State Section. This request must meet the requirement that the vessel will be trading just in areas without available inspectors. This extension will be granted from one (1) to three (3) months.



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8. Warning:

8.1. The owner or Master of a vessel who refuses the Inspection Service to which Law No. 39 of July 8, 1976 refers, or who fails to submit the form on which the Inspection is recorded shall be subject to penalty of up to ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00). In the event of reoccurrence, in addition to the penalty, there may be an immediate cancellation of the Panamanian Registry of the vessel without affecting the compliance with the obligations as set forth by the Laws of the National Merchant Marine.

July, 2024 – General review; numbers of paragraphs modified; correction in paragraph 1 (wording); modification in paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6; new paragraphs added 7 and 8; subjects added: Application, General conditions, Responsibilities, Extensions .

October, 2023 – Changed subject, compiles the circular MMC-20, include references, purpose, scope and text update.

July, 2002.

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

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