



SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE INTERNATIONAL SHIP REGISTRY

MARINE CIRCULAR MC-2022-001



To: Designated Registrars, Shipowners, Operators, Companies, Masters of Sao Tome and Principe-registered vessels, Recognized Organizations, and Maritime Radio Service Companies

Subject: Registration of ships under the flag of Sao Tome and Principe

1. Purpose

1.1 This Circular establishes the procedures for the registration of vessels under the flag of Sao Tome and Principe as well as the procedure for deletion of a vessel from the Registry.

2. General information

2.1 Sao Tome and Principe International Ship Registry (STPIR) accepts applications for most types of vessels, inter alia: pleasure yachts, vessels under construction, cargo ships, passenger vessels, and offshore units. These ships, with the exception of fishing vessels or vessels engaged in the harvesting, processing, and transport of marine living resources may be registered, provided that, they are owned by legally constituted corporate bodies or entities irrespective of their nationality or jurisdiction. Sao Tome and Principe-registered ships may also be bareboat charter-registered (BBC) under another flag.

2.2 Currently, there are no nationality, geographical trading, or age restrictions; however, ships of 20 years and over must pass an inspection by an authorised flag state inspector within the period of provisional registration, whereas ships of 30 years and over are required to pass an inspection by an authorised flag state inspector or Recognized Organization Surveyor prior to being provisionally registered.

2.3 A Bareboat Charter Registration shall be valid for the duration of the bareboat charter or until the expiry date of the certificates of registry issued by STPIR, whichever expires first, but in no case for a period exceeding two years.

2.4 The procedure and requirements for registration under a Bareboat Charter Contract under the flag of Sao Tome and Principe are similar to those of regular registration, except that the following documents need to be submitted to STPIR: Declaration of bareboat charter accompanied by the charter agreement, transcript or copy of the underlying certificate of registration, and Letter of Consent from the underlying registry, owners and mortgagees.

2.5 Registration, transfer, amendment, and discharge of mortgages may be requested and approved on presentation of the relative documents to STPIR.

3. Requirements for Provisional Registration

3.1 In order for a ship to be provisionally registered under the flag of Sao Tome and Principe, the following documents must be submitted:

- (a) Application for registration by the owner or an authorised representative or Designated Registrar;
- (b) Copy of the ship's International Tonnage Certificate;
- (c) Proof of ownership of the vessel;
- (d) Confirmation on which recognised organisation or Class Society will undertake the ship's statutory certification including ISM, ISPS, and MLC;

- (e) Application for Minimum Safe Manning Certificate;
- (f) Application for Ship Radio Station Licence; and
- (g) Information on the intended trading areas, shipowners, and operators (ISM and ISPS declaration forms).

4. Procedure for Registration

- 4.1 An application for the provisional registration of a vessel must first be submitted to the Registry along with the required documents for provisional registration as indicated in the relevant form.
- 4.2 Once the vessel is accepted to be registered, a Provisional Certificate of Registration, Ship Radio Station License and Minimum Safe Manning Certificate are issued by the Registrar with a validity of 6 months.
- 4.3 During this period, ship owners and/or their representatives can collect and submit the required documents for permanent registration to the Registrar for the issuance of the permanent certificates for a period of five years.
- 4.4 The Provisional Registration may be extended for a further period, or periods not exceeding in the aggregate six months from the date of the first extension.
- 4.5 For vessels under construction, laid-up status, or without valid applicable statutory or convention certificates, a non-valid for navigation or operation certificate of registry may be requested and issued by STPIR.

5. Documentation requirements for Definitive or Permanent Registration

- 5.1 The following documents shall be submitted for the definitive/permanent registration of a ship:
 - (a) Builder's certificate for vessels of new construction; a Bill of Sale, certification of legal Auction Sale, court documents, or any other document that is proof of ownership of the vessel;
 - (b) Deletion certificate or cancellation of registry from the last Administration of registry, showing that the vessel is free from liens, encumbrances, or otherwise;
 - (c) For SOLAS-sized ships, copy of the last updated Continuous Synopsis Record issued by the last Administration of registry;
 - (d) Statutory certificates and a copy of the International Tonnage Certificate issued on behalf of Sao Tome and Principe; and
 - (e) For vessels under a Bareboat Charter Contract or parallel registration status, that is, the registration of foreign ships under the flag of Sao Tome and Principe, or the Bareboat Charter registration of Sao Tome and Principe ships under a foreign flag, a copy of Bareboat Charter Contract, or, a copy of the Letter of Consent from the Mother Registry authorizing parallel registry, as applicable.

6. Deletion from the Registry

- 6.1 Deletion or cancellation of registry from Sao Tome and Principe can be requested at any time by the owner or an authorised representative, or Designated Registrar provided all liabilities and obligations in respect of the ship towards the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe have been fulfilled and the consent of all registered mortgagees is produced.
- 6.2 A request for deletion of a vessel from the Sao Tome and Principe International Ship Registry must be made by the owner or an authorised representative or Designated Registrar by completing and submitting the application for deletion from the STPIR specifying the reason for deletion and the new flag under which the vessel will be registered.
- 6.3 Once the application is submitted and processed, a certificate of cancellation of registration will be issued by the Registry.

6.4 Cancellation of the registry of a ship by STPIR due to non-compliance with the provisions of the applicable legislation and regulations may also be effected after adequate time has been given to the shipowners to regularise their status in the Registry, and for the registered mortgagees to take the necessary action to protect their interests

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