



PANAMA MARITIME AUTHORITY
Directorate General of Merchant Marine

Merchant Marine Circular No. 184

**To: Owners/Operators, Masters of Panamanian Flagged Vessels,
Recognized Organizations.**

Subject: Casualty Investigations of Panamanian flagged vessels

**References: Resolution No. 106-06-DGMM of January 30th, 2008
Resolution A. 849(20) of November 27th, 1997
Resolution A. 884(21) of November 25th, 1999**

This Merchant Marine Circular Supersedes Merchant Marine Circulars No. 31, 32, and 33.

The purpose of this Merchant Marine Circular is to set forth current rules and regulations on Marine Accident Investigations.

The **Chapter I, Regulation 21** of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) establishes that “each Administration undertakes to conduct an investigation of any casualty occurring to any of its ships” and that “each Contracting Government undertakes to supply the Organization with pertinent information concerning the findings of such investigations”.

Through Resolution No.106-06-DGMM, Panama has approved the Rules and Regulations pertaining to marine accident investigations.

These Rules and Regulations establish that the Marine Accident Investigation Department is the Special Unit in charge of investigating marine accidents and incidents which may increase the risk for human life or for the marine environment on board all Panamanian registered vessels.

The Rules and Regulations set forth that the purpose of all investigations to be carried out by the Marine Accident Investigation Department shall not be to practice criminal, civil, or administrative actions; for which they will only be subject for the purposes established in the Code for the Investigation of Marine Casualties and Incidents adopted by the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

These Rules and Regulations empower the Marine Accident Investigation Department to confiscate or withdraw, in the course of their investigations, the Log Book, equipment, licenses, documents, books, registries or vessel parts, with the whole purpose of executing a proper investigation.

Also, it empowers the Marine Accident Investigation Department to request all personnel on board a Panamanian registered vessel or any foreign registered vessels which are within the territorial waters of the Republic of Panama, operators, or individuals directly or indirectly involved in a marine accident or incident, so that they testify or be interrogated, either verbally or in writing, in reference to the marine accident or incident. All Masters, property owners, or operators of vessels which have suffered a marine accident or incident, shall maintain and keep all entries or materials relevant to the voyage, and must cooperate with the investigation.

All Recognized Organizations, as well as all marine safety inspectors directly or indirectly involved in a marine accident or incident, may be called to render statements, and they must provide all the entries and documents which shall be required to carry out the investigation of the marine accident or incident.

In the event owners, operators, masters, crew members and officers, or recognized organizations, do not comply with their duties and obligations to duly cooperate with the investigation or to inform whenever a marine accident or incident occurs, will be subject to the sanctions imposed by Law.

The General Directorate of Merchant Marine shall establish the necessary procedures or mechanisms to carry out adequate investigations of marine accidents or incidents, including the application of administrative restrictions against Panamanian registered vessels which become involved in a marine accident or incident.

In the event of marine accidents or incidents involving Panamanian registered vessels or marine accidents or incidents involving foreign vessel within Panamanian jurisdictional waters, owners/operators or masters shall immediately give notice thereof to the Marine Accident Investigation Department.

The contact details of the Marine Accident Investigation Department are as follows:

Telephone numbers: +507 501 5087 / 5039

Fax: +507 501 5088

Email: casualty@amp.gob.pa

All inquiries concerning this Circular or any request should be directed to:

Panama Maritime Authority

Tel: (507) 501-5010

General Directorate of Merchant Marine

Fax: (507)501-5011

P.O. Box 5245 Panama 5

Republic of Panama