



**IMMARBE**

International Merchant Marine Registry of Belize

## **VESSEL MONITORING SYSTEMS (VMS)**

**TO ALL SHIPOWNERS AND OPERATORS, DEPUTY REGISTRARS, AND RESIDENT AGENTS**

MSN Superseded:  
ISSUE DATE:

**24th November 2008**

Revision No.(mm/dd/yy):

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### **1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1. The purpose of this Fishing Vessel Circular is to provide guidelines to Owners and Operators with respect to the installation and maintenance of a functional vessel monitoring system.

### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1. Concerned that Owners and Operators are not installing their vessel monitoring system as per appropriate instructions and are not maintaining a functional equipment at all times, our Administration has decided to implement FVC-08/06 to assist owners in installing and maintaining a functional vessel monitoring system.

### **3. APPLICATION**

- 3.1. This Fishing Vessel Circular applies to all Belize registered fishing vessels and transshipment vessels engaged in the catching or taking of fish; any other activity which can reasonably be expected to result in the catching or taking of fish; any other activity directly related to fishing including the operation of transshipment vessels.

### **4. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCESS**

- 4.1 At the time of registration, the Owners are required to indicate on our Application Form for License to Fish on the High Seas, the type of equipment which they have on board and the relative information on the equipment required.

- 4.2 If, however, there is no equipment on board at the time of application for registration, the Owners and Operators are required to provide us with the type of equipment which they intend to install on board the vessel.
- 4.3 Owners/Operators are given one month from date of registration of the vessel to obtain and install their vessel monitoring equipment and provide us with the required information for the timely registration of the unit with Purplefinder.
- 4.4 With respect to dry cargo reefer carriers/refrigerated cargo vessels intending to be engaged in transshipment activities/transportation of marine resources on the high seas or in the EEZ of any State, Owners/Operators must first install their Inmarsat unit on board their vessels prior to us issuing their High Seas Fishing License, and as such, prior to them engaging in any form of transshipment activities.
- 4.5 The vessel must be equipped with any of the following transceivers only:
- Inmarsat C supplied from Thrane & Thrane or other Manufacturers
  - Inmarsat Mini C supplied from Thrane & Thrane or other Manufacturers
  - Inmarsat D+ supplied only from our VMS providers Pole Star Space Application Limited
- 4.6 The cost for purchasing, air freighting and/or fitting any of the abovementioned equipments will be borne by the Owners.
- 4.7 For vessels which will utilize an Inmarsat C or Mini C equipment the data as requested on the Application Form for License to Fish on the High Seas will need to be submitted.
- 4.8 The Inmarsat C or Mini C numbers can be obtained after the vessel has been registered from Mr. Victor Hui of Marine Radio Systems (email: [svgmafe@netvigator.com](mailto:svgmafe@netvigator.com) or [svgmafe@hx08.com](mailto:svgmafe@hx08.com)).
- 4.9 Connection to Purple Finder, our Vessel Monitoring System, will be effected within approximately 2 working days of receipt of all required information.
- 4.10 Owners who wish to purchase Inmarsat C or Mini C equipments should do so directly from their preferred suppliers and submit to us the abovementioned information so that we can authorize connection to Purplefinder. The below table shows a list of manufacturers that have produced Sat C Terminals and which are compatible with our system.

Anritsu	Debeg	Furuno (Felcom)
Husun	Intermarine	JRC
Litton	Marconi	Nera
Raytheon	SNEC	SP Radio
STC	Sailor	Sait Marine
Saturn C	Scanti	Sperry Marine
Standard Radio	Thrane & Thrane	Toshiba
Trimble		

For your guidance, any unit purchased from any of the abovementioned manufacturers must have a version of over 2.21. Any version below 2.21 will not be accepted as it is not compatible with our system.

- 4.11 Inmarsat D+ units are the most cost-effective solution for small fishing vessels. Purplefinder have a number of users in the fisheries sections who use their D+ service. The D+ unit will need to be ordered through Pole Star Space Applications Limited who will program it in their office in London so that it will work in the correct manner with both their service and the Inmarsat Network. They will then airfreight the unit to the address specified by Owners. This whole process takes approximately 2 weeks from the time of ordering. Polestar Space Applications Limited will not airfreight the equipment to Owners until payment has been received by them. The contact details for Pole Star Space Application Limited are:

Polestar Space Application Limited  
Tel: +44-207-313-7402  
Fax: +44-207-313-2401  
Email: [sales@polestarglobal.com](mailto:sales@polestarglobal.com)

- 4.12 Owners must ensure that they mention at the time of order of their Inmarsat D+ from Pole Star Space Application Limited, the name of the vessel and that it is Belize registered.

#### **MAINTAINING A FUNCTIONAL VMS AT ALL TIMES**

- 4.13 As Flag State we are obligated to monitor, control and surveille our vessels in accordance with our HSFA 2003, therefore, all Owners/Operator must ensure that their equipment is functional at all times so that we can accurately track the positions of these vessels. For your guidance, Purple Finder not only delivers positional data on marine charts via the internet, but also encompasses meteorological forecast data in both text and graphical form including tropical storms, which can be viewed via the live demo on their website [www.purplfinder.com](http://www.purplfinder.com). Furthermore, with such equipment, Owners will be able to improve the control of their vessels e.g. in ensuring that they do not fish illegally and that they do not sail out of zone to “sell” or “offload” their catch to other larger trawlers.

- 4.14 Vessels that will be in port for any period of time and will need to turn off or log out of their vessel monitoring unit are required to notify us accordingly by submitting the required “Letter of Guarantee”. Likewise, for vessels that need to log out of their systems for any other reason, such as damaged equipment etc., must also notify us accordingly by the submission of the abovementioned letter.

#### **REPLACEMENT OF AN INMARSAT EQUIPMENT OR INMARSAT NUMBER**

- 4.15 In the event that an Owner needs to replace the unit on their vessel or register the usage of another Inmarsat Number, a fee of US\$95.00 will be required for the deactivation and re-registration of the new unit and/or number.

- 4.16 IMMARBE is responsible for the initial registration and monthly subscription fee of all new units with Purplefinder. We receive position reports every 6 hours for each vessel and are charged accordingly. However, there will be occasions when an equipment malfunctions or will need additional polling to generate position reports. This normally is due to other schedules already present in the unit that cause unit confusion, such as being monitored by other sources. This will cause, in most cases, the monthly fee to surpass the \$50.00 mark which we pay per vessel and then instead of the normal fee we will have to pay per byte of traffic incurred between the unit and the satellite. In other cases, the unit just won't work unless we keep requesting a manual poll every time a position is needed. This repeated over a period of time will also generate traffic above the \$50.00 mark. Another case is where the unit just will not work. In these cases, tests will need to be carried out by our VMS providers. Auto recovery takes place, that is, Purplefinder will try to get the unit working without human intervention, this entails more tests, resets, polls etc. Again all this will surpass the \$50.00 mark. For the reasons listed above, we request that Owners/Operators ensure that their equipment is working at all times. However, if any of the problems listed above are encountered, the Owners will be liable for any fees charged to us in excess of the \$50.00 mark and will be invoiced accordingly.
- 4.17 Obtaining and maintaining a functional VMS at all times is mandatory, and as such Owners should ensure that their equipment are properly working and logged in at all times.
- 4.18 Owners/operators who may wish to have access to view their vessel's positions may submit a formal request to the Fishing Vessel Manager. An account will be set up free of charge with Polestar granting access to Owners/Operators to view their vessel(s).

## **5 IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS NOTICE**

- 5.1 This Merchant Shipping Notice is to be implemented forthwith and shall remain in force until further notification by our Administration.

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Valerie Lanza  
Fishing Vessels Manager  
IMMARBE

Any queries related to this Notice should be directed to:

INTERNATIONAL MERCHANT MARINE REGISTRY OF BELIZE  
Fishing Vessels Manager  
Tel. (501) 223-5026 / 5031 / 5047  
Fax. (501) 223-5048 / 5070  
e-mail. [Immarbe@btl.net](mailto:Immarbe@btl.net)

