



Office of
Deputy Commissioner
of Maritime Affairs

THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

Bureau Of Maritime Affairs

8619 Westwood Center Dr Suite 300
Vienna, VA U.S. 22182
Telephone: (703) 790-3434

October 26, 2006

MARINE OPERATIONS NOTE: 7/2006

RE: A. Ship Security Alert System (SSAS) Testing Procedure
B. SSAS Endorsement of ISSC

Supersedes: Marine Operations Note 4/2005

Dear Owner/Operator:

The following guidelines revise the SSAS testing procedure given in Marine Operations Note 4/2005. Marine Operations Note 4/2005 is hereby rescinded.

The procedure is revised to improve operational efficiency and has been necessitated considering the very large number of SSAS messages including numerous messages received from malfunctioning SSAS units. The procedure for SSAS Endorsement of ISSC has also been amended and is given below.

A. Ship Security Alert System (SSAS) Testing Procedure

1. Programming: At a minimum the SSAS message should provide:

- Name of ship;
- IMO Ship Identification Number;
- Call Sign;
- Maritime Mobile Service Identity;
- GNSS position (Latitude and Longitude) of the ship;
- Course and speed of the Ship and
- Date and time (UTC) of the GNSS position.

Additional information such as the name and contact phone number for the CSO may be included if the SSAS is capable of such programming but this additional information is not required.

2. Competent Authority: The competent authority for Liberia is the Office of the Deputy Commissioner for Maritime Affairs, Attn: Director of Maritime Security.

3. Destination: For Liberian flag ships the Ship Security Alert shall be sent directly to both the company and the Administration. The SSAS should be programmed to send an alert message to: alarm@liscr.com.

If the company has authorized a third party service provider to receive the SSAS messages on behalf of the company, please provide this Administration with the name and contact info for the service provider of the ship security alert system and coverage for your ships.

4. Testing: The Administration requires a test message as soon as the SSAS has been initially activated and **annually** thereafter. During testing of the system, we request that the test message contains the word: "TEST" in order to identify it as such and avoid the need for additional communication between the CSO and the Administration. If the system is not capable of inserting the word "TEST" into the alert message, then the CSO must send the Administration (security@liscr.com) an email in advance of sending the alert advising the Administration that the system will be tested.

5. Confirmation of SSAS Test Messages: Starting from the date of this notice the Administration will only provide confirmation of receipt of SSAS test message for audit and compliance verification purposes. Confirmation of other test messages will not be provided. To obtain confirmation of a SSAS test message for audit and compliance verification purposes the vessel or the company should request such a confirmation in advance. The request should be sent by e-mail to security@liscr.com and include:

- Date time of proposed test.
- Purpose of the test.
- E-mail address of the CSO (or the company) where the CSO requests the Administration to send the acknowledgement of the test message.
- Vessel name and IMO Number.

Please additionally note the following:

- The Administration requires a test message **only once a year** or before / during SSAS verification.
- Test messages will be confirmed during the working hours of the Administration.
- The SSAS test message should, as far as possible, be transmitted at the date and time specified in the request message.
- The confirmation e-mail of the SSAS test message by the Administration should be retained on board as evidence until the next audit.

B. SSAS Verification and Endorsement of ISSC

1. Initial SSAS Verification: The on board installation and operation of the SSAS must be verified within one year of installation by a security auditor from this Administration or the RSO that issued the ISSC for a particular vessel. The issuer of the ISSC is already familiar with the SSP and the vessel. The SSAS equipment and its operation are confidential. In order to maintain the confidentiality of the SSAS, the verification of the SSAS should be conducted by the same organization that issued the ISSC. The number of individuals involved in review and verification process, and who have knowledge of the location of the activation buttons should be kept to a minimum.

2. Verification Procedure

- **Ship Security Plan amendments:** Only those pages in the SSP that relate to the SSAS must be amended. The amended pages and the updated record of changes page shall be submitted to: security@liscr.com for review and approval in advance of the on board verification.
- **Sending a test message:** A SSAS message marked "TEST" shall be sent by the ship to the Administration in order to verify that the system works properly, prior to having the installation verified by an auditor. Confirmation of receipt of the SSAS message will be sent by email to the CSO. The CSO should provide a copy of the confirmation message to the ship's Master, so it can be available for viewing by the auditor that verifies the SSAS installation.
- **On board verification by the auditor:** Throughout the SSAS verification, the security auditor will evaluate the procedures outlined in the SSP, interview the Master and SSO on their knowledge of the procedures, and verify the installation and programming of the SSAS.
- In order for ship owners to not incur additional costs, no special attendance is required. The SSAS verification can take place in conjunction with another scheduled inspection, audit or survey provided:
 - the inspector or surveyor is also an authorized security auditor, and
 - the on board verification takes place within one year of the installation.For example, the on board installation verification can be conducted in conjunction with a Liberian annual safety inspection.

3. SSAS Verification Endorsement of ISSC. The Administration no longer requires endorsement of the ISSC following SSAS verification. A report or a letter indicating satisfactory verification of SSAS should be retained on board as proof of the verification. This letter will be provided by the auditor on satisfactory completion of the verification.

4. SSAS message sent in error: Should a SSAS message be sent that is not a test or an actual alert, the Company Security Officer should immediately confirm that the SSAS message was sent in error. The CSO will then inform all concerned parties and the Administration that the alert is false and that no emergency response action should be taken.

For additional information, Please contact the Security Department at +1 703 251 2453 or email: security@liscr.com

* * * * *