

Subject :

***Registration will prioritise
ISM Code Certifications***

NKTECHNICAL INFORMATION

No. : 230

Date : 13 October 1997

To Ship Owners and Ship Management Companies concerned

Dear Sir(s)

IACS (International Association of Classification Societies) has issued the press release which a prioritised registration of ISM Code certification for ships and companies has been launched from 1st October 1997.

IACS said ***"Companies registered with a member Society by 1st January 1998 can expect certification provided that their formal plans and timetable which have been prepared to comply with the ISM Code are kept"***.

According to the press release, a total 18,700 ships have to obtain SMC(Safety Management Certificate) by the "Phase 1" of 1st July 1998, however only over 2,100 ships had been certified by 30th June 1997. While ClassNK had issued around 700 certificates(SMCs) for ships by the same date, it means around 33% of 18,700 ships have been certified by ClassNK.

ClassNK has established internal training system for ISM Auditors and ISM Auditors network worldwide, and around 60% of class surveyors had become the ISM Auditors. ClassNK will do our best efforts for the certification of ISM Code with observing these procedures for handling the late application.

However, ClassNK's estimation indicates that around 1,800 ships will be audited and certified by ClassNK for the "Phase 1" of 1st July 1998. As you know well, our branches and overseas offices have commenced to undertake a shipboard audit from 1st August 1997, please kindly submit the application for shipboard audit to the nearest branches or overseas offices of ship's calling port at the early opportunity.

The IACS Press Release will be attached for your reference.

If you need more information about these matters, please do not hesitate to contact us. (ClassNK Ship Management Assessing Division, Head Office, Tokyo, Tel: 81-3-5226-2034, Fax: 81-3-5226-2030)

Attached

1. IACS Press Release dated on 1 October 1997

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Date 1 October 1997

PRESS RELEASE

REGISTRATION WILL PRIORITISE ISM CODE CERTIFICATIONS:

A register for ships and companies in process of seeking compliance with the ISM Code has been launched today (1 October 1997) by the International Association of Classification Societies (IACS).

Under the scheme, companies registered prior to 1 January 1998 will get priority treatment for compliance auditing and certification under the Code. In effect, IACS is drawing a clear distinction in attitude towards companies actively seeking to comply and those which are not.

Recognising the complex and interactive nature of ISM Code auditing and certification, the IACS initiative provides for a formal attestation for those owners and operators who have seriously and formally progressed the implementation of their safety management system pursuant to ISM Code certification and are well on the way to achieving full compliance by the "Phase 1" deadline of 1 July 1998.

Vessels requiring but lacking certification on 1 July 1998 will be in contravention of SOLAS 74 - and liable to detention by Port State Control. Several governments and Flag Administrations have already said they will take a tough stance on non-compliances.

A total of 18,700 vessels - passenger ships, tankers and bulk carriers - fall into "Phase 1". Of these, 14,000 are classed by IACS Members and a number may be involved in domestic trades and do not, therefore, have to comply with ISM Code requirements. IACS figures indicate that over 2100 ships had been certificated by 30 June 1997 but it seems likely that a backlog and late surge in applications is inevitable.

With the statutory authority delegated by Flag Administrations, much of the compliance auditing workload is the responsibility of IACS Members. Announcing the initiative, IACS' Chairman Dr. Tor-Christian Mathiesen said that IACS Members are committed to achieving the highest possible number of certifications over the next nine months.

However, he noted that certification planning and process lead times - together with inaction in some quarters - made it "virtually certain that many ships would miss the deadline"

Lack of responsibility:

He continued: "There are owners, operators and Flags still not taking the deadline seriously. The register will ensure that IACS Members give priority to those companies committing in good time to gain ISM Code certification".

Dr Mathiesen concluded: "Priority for companies clearly acting in good faith, and on track with the process, is the only fair way to address the issue. It would be wrong for these ships and companies to be penalised, by being trapped in a last-minute rush of those who have taken neither warnings - or their responsibilities - seriously"

Registration process:

Under IACS' initiative, companies registered with a Member society by 1 January 1998 can expect certification provided that their formal plans and timetable which have been prepared to comply with the ISM Code are kept.

Registration requires submission to the IACS Member of formal application for ISM Code Certification, together with timetabled plans for the implementation and ship/shore-based auditing to confirm compliance

IACS and other industry leaders and organisations have repeatedly stressed the need for accelerated progress towards compliance with the ISM Code. The Code is widely seen as the most important single initiative for many years towards a safer world fleet.

Notes to Editors:

IACS agreed formal Procedural Requirements for verification of ISM Code compliance in late 1995. It has also introduced guidelines for Certification auditing and mandatory training courses for auditors involved.

More recently (Summer 1996), an IACS' electronic database - managed from its London Secretariat - has been established as virtually the only single source of data on the majority of vessel and owner/operator compliances with the Code.

IACS' 11 Member Societies and two Associates class more than 90% of the world's merchant tonnage - over 450m. grt.

For further information contact:

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