

October 20, 2005

MR'S ADVISORY TO SHIPPING No. A-37-2005

TO: ALL STEAMSHIP AGENTES, OWNERS, AND OPERATORS

SUBJECT: AUTOMATIC IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM (AIS) INFORMATION

The purpose of this advisory is to stress the importance of ensuring that the information that is transmitted by the vessels' Automatic Identification System (AIS) is complete and accurate.

The International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities (IALA – AISM) while monitoring the AIS messages encountered that many vessels were transmitting incomplete or incorrect data.

The Panama Canal Authority has also been observing deficiencies in the AIS systems on some vessels arriving to transit the Canal. The most common deficiencies are:

- Vessel's static data is loaded incorrectly or not present at all. For example, incomplete or incorrect MMSI, vessel's name, vessel's dimensions and AIS GPS antenna position.
- Some vessels are not transmitting heading information or the information is incorrect.
- The Pilot Plug is not located in the first conning position or it is wired incorrectly.
- The correct wiring, as seen from the AIS equipment, which is taken from IMO's "Guideline for Installation of Shipborne Automatic Identification System", is as follows:
 - TX A is connected to Pin 1
 - TX B is connected to Pin 4
 - RX A is connected to Pin 5
 - RX B is connected to Pin 6
 - Shield is connected to Pin 9
- There is no power receptacle near the Pilot Plug location or the power receptacle has a voltage not compatible with the pilot's laptop. The voltage shall be 120 VAC 50/60Hz.

These inconsistencies may be due to the rapid introduction of the AIS System; however, unless remedial action is taken, it could become a permanent problem, hindering the usefulness of the AIS System.

Please refer to MR Advisories to Shipping Nos. A-05-2003, A-09-2003, and A-22-2003 for Panama Canal AIS requirements. Non-compliant vessels require that a supplemental tracking device be brought on board, with an associated fee.

It is essential that all masters verify that their vessels' AIS System is transmitting complete and accurate data and thus take full advantage of the Automatic Identification System (AIS).

ORIGINAL SIGNED

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