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Circular Letter No.1886/Rev.6  
8 August 2016

To: All IMO Member States  
Contracting Governments to the International Convention for the Safety of  
Life at Sea, 1974  
United Nations and Specialized Agencies  
Intergovernmental Organizations  
Non-governmental Organizations in consultative status

Subject: **Implementation of resolution A.1078(28) – IMO ship identification  
number scheme**

## **1 Assignment of IMO Numbers**

The IMO Ship Identification Number Scheme (identification scheme) was introduced on 19 November 1987 through the adoption of resolution A.600(15) on *IMO ship identification number scheme (scheme)*, as a measure to enhance ship safety and security, and was revised on 4 December 2013 in order to allow its application to fishing vessels of 100 gross tonnage (GT) and above, by the adoption of resolution A.1078(28) on *IMO Ship Identification Number Scheme*, which revoked resolution A.600(15).

As explained in resolution A.1078(28), the IMO ship identification number (identification number) is made of the three letters "IMO" in front of the seven digits of the Lloyd's Register (LR) Number and shipbuilders/shipowners are encouraged to provide details of all new orders to IHS Maritime & Trade (IHSM&T) (formerly known as IHS Fairplay (IHS-F)) to facilitate the assignment of identification numbers at the earliest opportunity.

Following the adoption of a new SOLAS chapter XI by the 1994 SOLAS Conference (in particular regulation 3 thereof, which corresponds now to regulation XI-1/3), the implementation of the scheme became mandatory for all passenger ships of 100 GT and upwards and to all cargo ships of 300 GT and upwards as of 1 January 1996.

In order to address further requests received, identification numbers may also be assigned to passenger ships of less than 100 GT, high-speed passenger craft, high-speed craft and mobile drilling units, covered by SOLAS regulation V/19-1. Also on a voluntary basis, Administrations may wish to obtain identification numbers for ships engaged solely on domestic voyages.

Flag Administrations, as well as shipowners/operators, are recommended, prior to forwarding their request to IHSM&T, to verify (through checking the ship's documentation) whether an identification number has already been assigned, in order to facilitate the assignment of the identification numbers to existing ships and to avoid unnecessary delays. It should be borne in mind that an identification number may have already been issued by

IHSM&T at the request of a classification society or the shipyard concerned. Assigned identification numbers are available in the IMO Global Integrated Shipping Information System (GISIS) module on "Ship and Company Particulars" on <https://gisis.imo.org/Public/SHIPS/Default.aspx>.

If an identification number for an existing ship cannot be identified or in the case of a new ship, requests to obtain identification numbers should be addressed to IHSM&T as advised below. These requests will be processed as quickly as possible. However, the number of requests and the related verification work may result in relatively short delays that should be taken into account by the flag Administration when issuing certificates.

Requests as mentioned above can be submitted on the following website <http://imonumbers.ihs.com> or sent to IHSM&T, together with the information on the individual ships concerned, using the form set out in the annex, at the following address:

IHS Maritime & Trade  
Sentinel House  
163 Brighton Road  
Coulston, Surrey  
CR5 2YH  
United Kingdom

Email: [ship.imo@ihs.com](mailto:ship.imo@ihs.com)  
Tel: +44 (0)1334 328300  
Fax: +44 (0)2032 532102

Should there be any difficulty in contacting IHSM&T, requests (including information on the ship concerned as detailed above) should be addressed to IMO at the following address [IMOnumbers@imo.org](mailto:IMOnumbers@imo.org).

## **2 Regular data exchanges between flag Administrations and IHSM&T to maintain the integrity of the IMO numbering schemes and of the identification numbers in circulation.**

The two IMO numbering schemes, i.e. the IMO Ship Identification Number Scheme and the IMO Unique Company and Registered Owner Identification Number Scheme, can only be managed effectively from a vessel and owner database that is maintained accurately and up to date. In their role as managers of these two IMO numbering schemes, IHSM&T has established regular exchanges of fleet information with flag Administrations according to an agreed data format (annex 3 of Circular Letter No.2554/Rev.3 on *Implementation of IMO unique company and registered owner identification number scheme* (resolution MSC.160(78)).

These regular data exchanges between flag Administrations and IHSM&T are one of the mechanisms that IHSM&T uses to maintain data accuracy and timeliness. They allow the validation of identification numbers held by flag Administrations and the reconciliation of any fleet or data differences that may emerge from the data collection network of IHSM&T. The data exchanges operate under the procedure for the collection of national fleets statistics\* (Circular Letter No.3347 on *Provision of fleet tonnage information*).

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\* IHSM&T World Fleet Statistics Table 1A.

**3 Additional facility for extending the numbering scheme to fishing vessels beyond the scope of resolution A.1078(28)**

In support of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in the context of the Global Record of Fishing Vessels Refrigerated Transport Vessels and Supply Vessels, the assignment of identification numbers will extend to include fishing vessels of non-steel hull construction of 100 GT and above. Furthermore, the management of the identification scheme will endeavour to cover all motorized inboard fishing vessels of less than 100 GT down to a size limit of 12 metres in length overall (LOA), that are authorized to operate outside waters under national jurisdiction.

Data exchanges between flag Administrations and IHSM&T will be developed for the fleets of fishing vessels covered by these additional facilities, separately from the data exchanges set out in paragraph 2.

This circular letter revokes Circular Letter No.1886/Rev.5.

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ANNEX



IHS Maritime & Trade  
Sentinel House  
163 Brighton Road  
Coulsdon, Surrey CR5 2YH  
United Kingdom

Tel: +44 1344 328300  
Fax: +44 203 253 2103  
Email: [ship.imo@ihs.com](mailto:ship.imo@ihs.com)

REQUEST FOR IMO SHIP  
IDENTIFICATION NUMBER

FOR ASSIGNMENT OF AN IMO NUMBER IN ACCORDANCE WITH RESOLUTION A.1078(28), PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING IN CAPITALS:-

CURRENT SHIP NAME\* \_\_\_\_\_

ALL FORMER NAME(S)\* \_\_\_\_\_

ORIGINAL NAME\* \_\_\_\_\_

FLAG\* \_\_\_\_\_ PORT OF REGISTRY \_\_\_\_\_ CALL SIGN \_\_\_\_\_

MMSI \_\_\_\_\_ OFFICIAL NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_ DATE OF FLAG REGISTRATION \_\_\_\_\_

CURRENT CLASS SOCIETY \_\_\_\_\_

TONNAGE (69 CONVENTION) YES  NO  FISHING NUMBER+ \_\_\_\_\_

GROSS\* \_\_\_\_\_ NET\* \_\_\_\_\_ DEADWEIGHT\* \_\_\_\_\_

LENGTH OVERALL\* \_\_\_\_\_ LENGTH B.P. \_\_\_\_\_ BEAM \_\_\_\_\_

MOULDED DEPTH\* \_\_\_\_\_ DRAUGHT \_\_\_\_\_ DATE OF KEEL LAYING \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF LAUNCH \_\_\_\_\_ DATE OF COMPLETION\* \_\_\_\_\_

*Note: Shipbuilding details are essential to issue an IMO Number for new buildings prior to completion*

SHIPBUILDER\* \_\_\_\_\_ SUB-CONTRACTOR BUILDER\* \_\_\_\_\_

PLACE OF BUILD\* \_\_\_\_\_ HULL No.\* \_\_\_\_\_ HULL MATERIAL\* \_\_\_\_\_

SHIP TYPE DESCRIPTION\*\*\* \_\_\_\_\_

REGISTERED OWNER† & ADDRESS†\*  
(Including Fax, Telephone & Email)

MANAGER† & ADDRESS†  
(Including Fax, Telephone, Email & Website)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(MARPOL Annex I requirements for OIL TANKERS) The ship complies with regulation 19 (double hull) Yes  No   
The ship complies with regulations 20.5, 21.6.1 and 21.6.2 Yes  No   
Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
The ship is subject to CAS requirements of regulation 20.7 and 21.6.1 Yes  No

NUMBER OF MAIN ENGINES\* \_\_\_\_\_ ENGINE MODEL\* \_\_\_\_\_ MANUFACTURER\* \_\_\_\_\_

KW OF EACH ENGINE \_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER OF PROPELLERS \_\_\_\_\_

COMPANY REQUESTING IMO NUMBER *Note: An IMO number cannot be issued without the following information:*

COMPANY NAME\* \_\_\_\_\_ CONTACT NAME\* \_\_\_\_\_

SENDER'S EMAIL\* \_\_\_\_\_ SENDER'S FAX NUMBER\* \_\_\_\_\_

\* Required Fields – all ships

† Required Fields – Ships in service only

+ Distinctive Number of Letters for Fishing Vessels

++ The type of fishing vessels should include details of the method of fishing and the gear