17 July 2017

Marine Advisory: 06/2017

SUBJECT: **Panama Canal Shipboard Oil Pollution Emergency Plan (PCSOPEP) Requirements**

Ref: **Panama Canal Authority (ACP) OP NOTICE TO SHIPPING No. N-12-2015**

Dear Shipowner/Operator/Master:

The purpose of this Marine Advisory is to present the requirements and regulations of the Panama Canal SOPEP (PCSOPEP), which became effective January 1, 2005. The Liberian Administration, after reviewing and evaluating this regulation, has incorporated these guidelines to assist shipowners, operators and masters.

At all times, the ACP acts as the sole Oil Spill Response Organization (OSRO) for all vessels irrespective of the flag, in transit or awaiting transit of the Panama Canal.

General Overview

PCSOPEP requirements were promulgated with Agreement No. 78 of May 27, 2004 of the ACP Board of Directors and became effective on January 1, 2005. It amended Chapter IX, Section Four and Annex, of the Regulation on Navigation in Panama Canal Waters (Regulation).

The PCSOPEP is a program that seeks to implement emergency preparedness strategies for Panama Canal waters. It aids the ACP in minimizing consequences of spills and emergencies by safeguarding life, reducing the impact on the environment and ensuring the continuous operation of the Canal.

All shipowners, operators and masters using the Panama Canal have the primary responsibility of implementing the PCSOPEP, participating in the response and notifying the ACP, as stated in Section four of Chapter IX of the Regulation on Navigation in Panama Canal Waters.

Applicability

Commercial Vessels: The PCSOPEP program requirements apply to toll-paying vessels that transit the Panama Canal with 400 metric tons or more carrying capacity of oil as cargo and/or fuel.

Plan Requirement and Authorized Person

PCSOPEP for a vessel under the Liberian flag shall be developed by an organization or individual experienced in pollution prevention and response.

The Regulation further requires that an Authorized Person be designated in the plan to act as a liaison between the vessel and the ACP.

The Authorized Person shall comply with (but are not limited to) the following:

- Reside in the Republic of Panama;
- Be fluent in either English or Spanish;
- Understand the vessel's PCSOPEP; and
- Act as a liaison with the ACP.

The Authorized Person can also help obtain and consign, on behalf of the vessel, acceptable guarantees to the satisfaction of the ACP to cover the costs of the response and cleanup of oil spills in Canal waters. A copy of this bond should be onboard at all times.

SeaNet Panama

The Liberian Registry's affiliated SeaNet Panama office provides PCSOPEP development and approval, and also acts as an Authorized Person representative and liaison to the Panama Canal Authority pursuant to the Regulation.

Advantages of using SeaNet Panama's new premier services include:

- Company with offices in Panama;
- Available 24 hours/365 days a year;
- Knowledgeable and qualified personnel with more than 15 years in the maritime sector in Panama and experienced with pollution containment and recovery activities;
- The designated Authorized Person is also a Liberian auditor/inspector and casualty investigator;
- Providing a wide area of coverage in the event of an emergency;
- Competitive fees with no hidden costs from agents;
- Single window of services and consolidation of accounts;
- SeaNet is partnered with and supported by the Liberian Registry; and
- Representative offices are strategically located all over the world, available to meet your needs anywhere at any time.

For further information or questions regarding this Advisory, please contact the Registry's Panama Regional Office, Hi Tech Plaza, Floor #8, Office 8a, 52 Street and 50 Street, Obarrio, Panama, republic of Panama, Telephone: +507 263 2199 or email seanetpma@ycfmaritime.com

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