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TRANSFER OF SHIPS BETWEEN STATES

1 The Marine Environment Protection Committee, at its fifty-second session, and the Maritime Safety Committee, at its seventy-ninth session, approved the procedure against which the transfer of ships between flag States might be considered, which had been developed by the Sub-Committee on Flag State Implementation, as set out at annex.

2 The procedure aims at increasing transparency in the relationship between flag States in the interest of maritime safety. The issue of transfer of ships between flag States is covered in a number of IMO conventions and instruments. Currently, these place the obligation for providing information relating to ships on the former flag State at the voluntary request of the new flag State. The recommended procedure, outlined in the annex, attempts to encourage the new flag State to actively seek information.

3 Member Governments are invited to bring this circular and annex to the attention of all parties concerned.

ANNEX

RECOMMENDED PROCEDURE FOR THE TRANSFER OF SHIPS BETWEEN FLAG STATES

For a ship engaged on international voyages to enjoy the benefits and privileges, that may be bestowed upon it, it must be under the jurisdiction of a flag State, the flag of which it is entitled to fly. To facilitate transfer of ships between flag States and to increase transparency in the relationships between former and new flag States in the interest of maritime safety, the following procedure is recommended:

- .1 upon the registration of a ship new to their registries, flag States should endeavour to ensure that the ship in question complies with the applicable international rules and regulations and, if necessary, liaise with the previous flag State;
 - .2 upon the request of the new flag State, the flag of which the ship is entitled to fly, the former flag State the flag of which the ship was entitled to fly should promptly provide details of deficiencies, non-conformities with their applicable timescales and any other safety related information.
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