



**REPUBLIC OF
THE MARSHALL ISLANDS**
MARITIME ADMINISTRATOR

Marine Notice

No. 2-013-4

Feb/2017

TO: ALL SHIPOWNERS, OPERATORS, MASTERS AND OFFICERS OF MERCHANT SHIPS, AND RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATIONS

SUBJECT: Approval for Shipboard Marine Pollution Emergency Plans for Oil and/or Noxious Liquid Substances for Republic of the Marshall Islands Ships

- References:**
- (a) **MARPOL**, *International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, Consolidated Edition 2011*, as amended
 - (b) **IMO Resolution [MEPC.85\(44\)](#)**, *Guidelines for the development of shipboard marine pollution emergency plans for oil and/or noxious liquid substances*, adopted 13 March 2000, as amended by **IMO Resolution [MEPC.137\(53\)](#)**, adopted 22 July 2005
 - (c) **RMI Marine Notice [2-013-9](#)**, *Vessel Response Plans and Salvage and Marine Firefighting Capability Requirements for Tank and Nontank Vessels Operating in US Waters*
 - (d) **RMI Marine Guideline [2-11-15](#)**, *Organizations Acting on Behalf of the Republic of the Marshall Islands Maritime Administrator*

PURPOSE

This Notice provides the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) Maritime Administrator (the “Administrator”) policy concerning the approval of Shipboard Marine Pollution Emergency Plans (SMPEPs). This Notice, in which the references have been updated and policy with respect to change of flag articulated, supersedes Rev. 05/14. Nothing in this update changes past Administrator policy or the requirements for the development and approval of oil and/or noxious liquid substances plans.

APPLICABILITY

This instruction applies to the following RMI-flagged vessels:

- oil tankers over 150 gross tons (GT), and
- every ship, including yachts and fishing vessels, other than an oil tanker, over 400 GT.

REQUIREMENTS

1.0 General

- 1.1 Every oil tanker of 150 GT and above and every ship other than an oil tanker of 400 GT and above shall carry on board a Shipboard Oil Pollution Emergency Plan (SOPEP) in accordance with International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) Regulation I/37 and International Maritime Organization (IMO) Resolution [MEPC.85\(44\)](#).
- 1.2 Every ship of 150 GT and above certified to carry noxious liquid substances in bulk shall carry on board a SMPEP for noxious liquid substances prepared in accordance with MARPOL Regulation II/17 and IMO Resolution MEPC.85(44).
- 1.3 In the case of ships to which both MARPOL Regulation I/37 and II/17 apply, the two (2) plans may be combined. In this case, the title of such a plan shall be “Shipboard Marine Pollution Emergency Plan (SMPEP),” and it should be prepared in accordance with IMO Resolution MEPC.85(44).
- 1.4 Owners and operators of all tank and nontank vessels intending to trade in the United States (US) are required to have a US Coast Guard (USCG) approved Vessel Response Plan (VRP) on board in addition to the SOPEP(s) (see RMI Marine Notice [2-013-9](#)). The requirement for a VRP also applies to delivering and receiving vessels conducting bulk oil cargo lightering operations within the exclusive economic zone of the US (where cargo is destined for a port or place in the US). Vessels that do not have such a VRP may be subject to USCG enforcement action and may not be permitted to enter US waters.

2.0 Plan Development and Approval

2.1 General

- 2.1.1 All SMPEPs must be approved by Administrator. The Administrator has authorized as Recognized Organizations (RO) certain Classification Societies and Appointed Representatives (ARs) (for yachts) to approve these plans on its behalf. (See RMI Marine Guideline [2-11-15](#)).
- 2.1.2 Because each RO has different procedures, vessel owners and vessel operators are to contact the respective RO for guidance on the development and approval of these plans.
- 2.1.3 The Classification Society or AR selected for plan approval is familiar with the US regulations and should be able to assist in the process of developing VRPs, if required, and obtaining USCG approval for those plans.

2.2 Change of Flag or Class

- 2.2.1 A SOPEP or SMPEP previously approved by a Classification Society that is a member of the International Association of Classification Societies (IACS) does not need to be submitted to the Administrator for review. However, the attending surveyor must verify that necessary revisions have been made to reflect the RMI as the flag State. The vessel’s particulars page must also be verified.

- 2.2.2 Similarly, a SOPEP or SMPEP approved by the USCG in accordance with MARPOL does not need to be submitted to the Administrator for review. However, the attending surveyor must verify that the necessary revisions have been made to reflect the RMI as the flag State and that the port of registry and vessel name are updated appropriately.
- 2.2.3 If a SOPEP or SMPEP has been previously approved by an RO that is not a member of IACS or by an Administration other than the US, the Administrator must be consulted. In such cases, the gaining RO should contact the Administrator at: technical@register-iri.com.
- 2.2.4 In order to optimize RO approval and verification efforts while still following governing mandatory regulations, the RO shall only require a copy of the SOPEP or SMPEP for its files and the stamping on behalf of the Administrator (where needed) may be done by the surveyor during the flag change survey.
- 2.2.5 SOPEP and SMPEP re-approval shall only be required at management change.