Panama Maritime Authority
General Directorate of Merchant Marine
Control and Compliance Department

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V.04

KEY DETAINABLE DEFICIENCIES FOR PANAMA - FLAGGED VESSELS UNDER CHINA MSA PORT STATE CONTROL (PSC) INSPECTIONS – 2025

No.: MMN-06/2026

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1. Purpose:

The purpose of this Merchant Marine Notice is to inform all Shipowners, Operators, Legal Representatives, Masters, Recognized Organizations (ROs), and Shipping Agencies of detainable Port State Control (PSC) deficiencies identified by the China MSA on Panamanian-flagged vessels arriving at or operating within China jurisdictional waters in 2025, with the objective of mitigating detention risk, enhancing vessel safety, and maintaining the high-performance standing of the Panama Ship Registry.

2. Applicability:

1) All vessels flying the Panamanian flag, regardless of size, type, or trading area, that have undergone PSC inspections or detentions in arriving at or operating within China ports.
2) Shipowners, Operators, Masters, Legal Representatives, and Port Agents responsible for vessel compliance, navigation safety, and port operations.

3. Detainable Deficiencies Identified under China MSA - Port State Control (PSC) – 2025 for Panamanian-Flagged Vessels.

An analysis of 2025 inspections within the Panamanian fleet identifies five key areas where regulatory adherence and operational safety require prioritized attention. Addressing these technical and procedural gaps is essential for ensuring the highest standards of maritime safety.

The following is a summary of the 5 main causes of detention recorded in the Panamanian fleet:

07109	Fire safety (Fixed fire extinguishing installation)
1	The local water mist extinguishing system for the m/e area found malfunction, as evidenced by the fact that the water pump could not be started after being manually switched-on
2	Three sprinklers in paint store corroded and malfunction.
3	More than 110 cylinders out of 152 cylinders of fixed co2 firefighting system not carried out hydrostatic test since the year of 2000
4	Paint room alarm for releasing co2 found out of order
5	The bosun and locker at the bow is used to store a large quantity of paint, and the compartment is not protected by a fixed fire-fighting system
6	The co2 pipes protecting no1, no2 and no4 cargo holds severely rusted and holed
7	One group fixed co2 cylinders remote release line seized and co2 can't be released by driving air.
8	Fixed local application fire-extinguishing system for engine room out of order. 1. as ums, automatic releasing malfunctioned. 2. for purifiers and generator engines, water mist sprinkling malfunctioned.
9	The rubber packing for e/r skylight deteriorated and broken, and the skylight cover corroded and holed (dia. about 40mm) on 4th deck, e/r protected by fixed co2 firefighting system.
10	Engine room CO2 releasing alarm located in engine room malfunction

03108	Water/Weathertight conditions (Ventilators, air pipes, casings)
1	One ventilator for bosun store room cannot be closed completely and one ventilator for fixed co2 room be with one hole.
2	The mech vent of the no.3 motor room worn about 20cm*1cm.
3	Closing appliance for steering gear room and CO2 room ventilators at poop deck stocked.
4	Air pipe of no.3 ballast tank cracked and four air pipes self-closing device for no.2 ballast tank & amp, forepeak tank seized.
5	The float disc of sewage tank air pipe seized.
6	over ten ventilators on main deck unable to be closed completely and the height of all ventilators less than 900mm
7	Bottom of air pipe for D.O tank on Stbd deck corroded and holed about 3cm*1cm.
8	WBT (3p) air pipe not provided with floating disc.
9	Air pipe head for No.2P BWT holed (size about 4cm*3cm) and floating ball of air pipe head for void space near bay 38s seized.
10	Height of air pipe serviced for FPT apt less than 760mm, coaming height of man hole for No.1 cargo hold less than 600mm ; ventilator serviced for bosun store whose coaming height less than 900mm

07114	**Fire safety (Remote Means of control (opening, pumps, ventilation, etc.) Machinery spaces)**
1	Quick-closing valve of D.O. tank for emergency generator not directly connected with the D.O tank (one valve between the D.O. tank and the quick-closing valve, and the distance of them about 76cm)
2	In multi-engine installations which are supplied from the same fuel source, the means of isolating the fuel supply piping to individual engines affect the operation of the other engines.
3	The quick closing valves designed for the F.O sett tk and the F.O deep tk(P) unable to be closed remotely, and the quick closing valve for D.O service tk is kept in the open position by bolts.
4	Fire dampers of both side e/r ventilations unable to be closed by operating handles
5	The control air pipe for no.3 g/e F.O inlet isolation valve disconnected and the hand wheel missing.
6	Inability to provide effective start-up compressed air to remotely control the fuel isolation valve of No.1, No.2, No.3 generators.
7	C/E could not find isolating valves designed on fuel oil pipe of d/g engines during inspection.
8	Quick closing valve of emergency generator diesel oil service tank cannot be fully closed by remote means.
9	The air reservoir of remote control quick closing valve for e/r fuel oil tank leaking gas seriously in fire control station.
10	The ventilation pipe of no.4 fuel tank on starboard side rusted and holed about 10cm*5cm.

11101	**Life saving appliances (Lifeboats)**
1	Air cylinders of self-contained air support system of lifeboat(p-side) not connect with air pipe line.one cylinder of self-contained air support system for lifeboat(s-side) head v/v air leaking when test
2	The remote release device of no.2 lifeboat defective
3	Steering gear system of free-fall L/B - not synchronize with rudder, and the propeller hit fairing during running.
4	The hull near release hook of l/b cracked
5	The bow access hatch of the lifeboat cannot be watertight closed
6	Automatic closing drain valve of both side lifeboats unable to automatically close.
7	Totally enclosed lifeboat hull found one hole without closing device (both side, diameter 5cm).
8	4 centimeter wide big hole on the exhaust pipe of the starboard side lifeboat, a large amount of exhaust gas discharged into the lifeboat.
9	4 set of safety belt in Stbd l/b missing, 2 set damaged, l/b in poor sanitary condition
10	The ventilation of both side l/b unable to be watertight closed

07199	Fire safety (Other (fire safety))
1	The small diameter self - closing control cock of sounding pipe termination for D.O. tank (s/s) in E/R not provided.
2	During inspection, all engineers did not know how to individually control three fuel oil inlet isolation V/V for three G/E, cannot be tested.
3	The oil-level gauge for D.O.T.(p) and d.o.t(s) where sounding pipes are used and terminate in machinery space out of order
4	The distance between one P/V V/V and anchor windlass be 7.3m
5	The outlet valve of the port diesel oil tank was faulty with severe leakage. The ship was using hoses and a portable pump to transfer oil.
6	Oil leaking alarm for #2 G/E malfunction
7	The oil-level gauges of the port and starboard diesel oil tanks used cylindrical glass, and a section of the port diesel oil tank level gauge missing.
8	Excessive oily water accumulated on the first and second platform, and surfaces of the m/e and generators in e/r.
9	No.1 steering gear hydraulic control valve leaking heavily, fuel oil supply unit leaking heavily
10	Hot work for motor room not follow the safety procedure (pureeing, free, etc.)

4. Fleet Advisory – Compliance Emphasis:

In light of the above findings, this Administration strongly advises all Owners, Operators, and Masters to ensure strict compliance with applicable international conventions, PMA circulars, and industry best practices, with particular attention to the following:

- Merchant Marine Circular No. MMC-404.
  Measures adopted to enhance the performance of the Panamanian Merchant Fleet – Pre-arrival checklist for ports under the Port State Control (PSC).
- Merchant Marine Circular No. MMC-384.
  Guidelines for appeals process against Port State Control deficiencies/detentions.

Key IMO and International References:

- SOLAS / Chapter I / Reg. 11 – Maintenance of conditions after survey.
- ISM / Part A / 10 – Maintenance of the ship and equipment.
- Resolution A.1206(34) – Procedures for Port State Control, 2025.
- MSC/Circ.1070 – Ship design, construction, repair and maintenance.
- MSC.1/Circ.1253 – Shipboard technical operating and maintenance manuals.

5. Strategic Focus:

This Merchant Marine Notice highlights the expectations of Port State Control Officers during inspections conducted by the China MSA underscores the importance of:

- Effective Safety Management System implementation.
- Robust onboard maintenance programs.
- Proper preparation prior to arrival at China MSA ports.
- Continuous compliance with statutory and operational requirements.

The Panama Maritime Authority expects all Panamanian-flagged vessels to ensure full and continuous compliance with these standards. Failure to do so may result in detentions, major deficiencies, operational restrictions, and adverse impacts on the vessel's operational status and the overall performance of the Panama Registry.

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Inquiries concerning the subject of this Merchant Marine Notice or any other request should be forward to:

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