



Date: 21 Octobre 2020

Circular no.: 0048C/TG/10/20

To: All Owners / Managers / Operators / Agents / Deputy Registrars / Recognized organizations certifying vessels on behalf of the Togolese Administration / Port state control officers

SUBJECT: "USE OF ELECTRONIC RECORD BOOKS UNDER THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION FOR THE PREVENTION OF POLLUTION FROM SHIPS (MARPOL) ONBOARD I.S.R. OF TOGO-REGISTERED SHIPS".

Scope:

This Merchant Marine Circular aims to inform all interested parties of Togolese flagged vessels on adopted amendments to MARPOL by MEPC for the use of electronic records books onboard vessels, entered into force by 1st of October 2020 and also to provide an update to all concerned parties regarding the acceptance of electronic Record Books (e-RBs) onboard Togo flagged vessels for record-keeping requirements related to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL Convention). In the same context the Marine Environment Protection Committee at its 74th session, released also the Guidelines for the use of electronic record books under MARPOL, through Resolution MEPC.312(74), as a start in addressing the transition to paper-free vessels. The I.S.R. of Togo, based on this MMC permits the use of approved electronic oil record book (e-ORB) as an alternative substitute for the traditional paper ORB.


References:

- a. IMO Resolution MEPC.312(74).
- b. IMO Resolution MEPC.314(74).
- c. IMO Resolution MEPC.316(74).
- d. IMO Resolution MEPC. 317(74).

INTRODUCTION

A key element of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) regulations is the recording of discharges associated with the prevention of pollution from ships. A number of MARPOL Annexes require the recording of particular discharges. The format for the recording of discharges under MARPOL is provided in the appendixes to the relevant MARPOL Annexes. Traditionally, the format of these record books has been provided in hard copy by the Administration. However, as companies and shipowners increasingly focus on ways to operate in an environmentally responsible manner and aim to reduce the heavy burden associated with paperwork through electronic means, the concept of operational logs in an electronic format has become a popular consideration. It is considered that this approach to recording and reporting should be encouraged as it may have many benefits for the retention of records by companies, crew and officers.

MARPOL AMENDMENTS-IMO GUIDELINES ON THE USE OF ELECTRONIC RECORD BOOKS (ERB).

1. The Marine Environment Protection Committee adopted amendments to MARPOL Annex I, II, V and VI, and the 2009 NOX Technical Code via resolutions MEPC.314(74), MEPC.316(74), and MEPC.317(74), to enable the use of electronic record books on board ships. The amendments have entered into force on the 1st October 2020.
2. The Marine Environment Protection Committee at its 74th session, also released the Guidelines for the use of electronic record books under MARPOL, through Resolution MEPC.312(74), as a start in addressing the transition to paper-free vessels. The Guidelines have been adopted to address the use of electronic record books (ERB) on board, applicable to the following books: 



- (1) Oil Record Book, parts I and II (MARPOL Annex I, regulations 17.1 and 36.1).
- (2) Cargo Record Book (MARPOL Annex II, regulation 15.1).
- (3) Garbage Record Book, parts I, and II (MARPOL Annex V, regulation 10.3).
- (4) Ozone-depleting Substances Record Book (MARPOL Annex VI, regulation 12.6).
- (5) Recording of the tier and on/off status of marine diesel engines (MARPOL Annex VI, regulation 13.5.3).
- (6) Record of Fuel Oil Changeover (MARPOL Annex VI, regulation 14.6); and
- (7) Record Book of Engine Parameters (NO_x Technical Code, paragraph 6.2.2.7).

It is to be noted that after the 1st October 2020, electronic record books can start being used as an alternative of hard copy record books.

3. The I.S.R. of Togo brings to the attention of all concerned parties the above guidelines issued by the International Maritime Organization in the form of Resolution MEPC.312(74), which provides standardized information on approving an electronic record book, to ensure that the obligations of MARPOL are met and that there is a consistent approach to approving such systems.

4. Herewith the I.S.R. of Togo prescribes that Recognized Organizations (ROs) to the I.S.R. of Togo are authorized to approve electronic record books used onboard per MEPC.312(74). Following approval, ROs should issue a **"Declaration of Electronic Record Book"** to the ship on behalf of this Administration (see Appendix IMO Resolution MEPC. 312(74) "Example Declaration"). In this regard, the electronic record book shall only be officially used after the ship is issued with a **"Declaration of Electronic Record Book"**.

5. For the case that a shipowner decides to use an electronic record book to record operational logs as an alternative of a hard copy record book, then the respective electronic system utilized must be fully in compliance with the requirements contained in Resolution MEPC.312(74) before it can be approved for use on behalf of the I.S.R. of Togo. Any electronic system deemed to meet the relevant criteria will be issued with a written Declaration of MARPOL Electronic Record Book issued in terms of Resolution MEPC.312(74). The said Declaration must be carried on board the ship for regulatory surveys and inspections. The first entry in the e-ORB and thus the first page printed from the e-ORB should indicate a date after the date indicated on the issued **"Declaration of MARPOL Electronic Record Book"**.

6. To be noted that the use of electronic record books in no way relieves shipowners of their existing duty under MARPOL to accurately maintain and produce records during an inspection. During an inspection, a ship must be able to produce the electronic record book and the written **"Declaration of MARPOL Electronic Record Book"** issued in terms of paragraph 5 of Resolution MEPC.312(74). It is recommended that if a ship cannot produce the electronic record book or a declaration provided by the RO's during the PSC inspection, the PSC officer should request to view an alternative verified copy of the records or a hard copy record book for verification. Shipowners, ship operators, and managers who use electronic record books onboard their ships should ensure that the assigned crewmembers are familiar with the use, maintenance, and safekeeping of the electronic record books for verification and since these electronic record books will be presented to PSC officers during inspections using the ships' onboard equipment.

7. Furthermore, and notwithstanding the MARPOL Regulations and related guidance, it is important to note that some coastal and port States potentially may implement additional or even different domestic regulations and/or requirements in waters and port areas falling under their jurisdiction. Owners/managers must ensure that their crews are familiar with the requirements applicable in the relevant trading areas. Since the regulatory enforcement strategy may differ from one region/port to another, crews must be provided with clear procedures and guidance on this matter well in advance of the vessel's navigation to the intended area of operation and port of call. It is emphasized that there might be ports that may not accept the use of electronic record books. Vessels calling to these ports should maintain appropriate hardcopy MARPOL records. #



8. Ship owners/ operators and masters are advised before replacing the hardcopy record books with fully digital ones to carefully consider the issue based on the vessels trading area and ports of call.

9. To conclude, before opting for and using a MARPOL ERB as the vessel's only official logbook the following should be confirmed:

- all relevant Port States accept MARPOL ERB
- The specific MARPOL ERB will be approved by an RO authorised by TOGO ISR
- A "Declaration of MARPOL electronic record book" will be issued to the ship upon installation by an authorised RO.

For the International Ship Registry of Togo




Vera N. MEDAWAR
Registrar

For the Maritime Authority of Togo




Marchonnawè BAKAT
Director

Encl.:

RESOLUTION MEPC.312(74).
RESOLUTION MEPC.314(74).
RESOLUTION MEPC.316(74).
RESOLUTION MEPC.317(74).