



Circ. No. 006 / FSI 003

May 30, 2013

TO: Recognized Organizations, Ship Owners, Company Security Officers (CSO) / Alternative Company Security Officers, Masters, Ship Security Officers (SSO)

SUBJECT: Ship's Security Alert System (SSAS) Test Procedures For a Vessel registered under Georgian Flag

**Guidance for Recognized Organizations,
Ship Owners, Company Security Officers (CSO) / Alternative
Company Security Officers, Masters, Ship Security Officers (SSO)**

1. Purpose

1.1 Present document provides guidance and where necessary instructions to assist CSO, SSO and Masters in the process of testing SSAS on a Vessel registered under Georgian Flag.

2. Application

2.1. All the Vessels registered under Georgian Flag applicable to ISPS.

3. Ship Security Alert System (SSAS) Testing Procedure

3.1 Initial Installation Testing of SSAS

The competent authority for receiving the SSAS alert message for a Vessel registered under Georgian Flag is the Georgian Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC Georgia). Testing of initial installed SSAS on board a Vessel registered under Georgian Flag to confirm correct functioning and settings of equipment, which involves sending of test message to MRCC should follow the below guidance:

- 3.1.1 The SSAS alert test message should be printed with the word "TEST TEST TEST" either in the message or in the Subject row.
- 3.1.2. If the above arrangement was not applicable for the SSAS, the CSO, SSO or ship's master should inform MTA before and after the test.
- 3.1.3. SSAS should be reset immediately after the test so as to avoid unnecessary re-send of test message.
- 3.1.4. Confirmation reply will be given by MRCC GEORGIA as soon as possible on request. If our reply is not received, please contact the MRCC GEORGIA.
- 3.1.5. Test may be arranged through 24/7 hours. However, application by e-mail should be made in advance to the FSI department and MRCC GEORGIA.

- 3.1.4. Confirmation reply will be given by MRCC GEORGIA as soon as possible on request. If our reply is not received, please contact the MRCC GEORGIA.
- 3.1.5. Test may be arranged through 24/7 hours. However, application by e-mail should be made in advance to the FSI department and MRCC GEORGIA.

Programming:

At a minimum the SSAS message should provide:

!!! Test Call !!!

Vessel Name:

MMSI:

IMN:

IMO:

CALL SIGN:

LAT:

LON:

COURSE:

SPEED:

TIME (UTC):

DATE:

Additional information such as the name and contact phone number for the CSO may be Included if the SSAS is capable of such programming but this additional information is not Required.

3.2. Destination

For the Vessels registered under Georgian Flag the Ship Security Alert shall be sent directly to both the company and MRCC Georgia.

If the company has authorized a third party service provider to receive the SSAS messages On behalf of the company, please provide this to FS Department of MTA with the name and contact Info for the service provider of the ship security alert system and coverage for your ships.

3.3. Testing

MTA requires a test message as soon as the SSAS has been initially activated and **annually** thereafter. During testing of the system, we request that the test message contains the word: "TEST" in order to identify it as such and avoid the need for additional communication between the CSO and MTA. If the system is not capable of inserting the word "TEST" into the alert message, then the CSO must send the MTA an e-mail in advance of sending the alert advising that the system will be tested.

3.4. Confirmation of SSAS Test Messages

Starting from the date of this notice MTA will only provide confirmation of receipt of SSAS test message. Confirmation of other test messages will not be provided. To obtain confirmation of a SSAS test message for audit and compliance verification purposes the vessel or the company should request such a confirmation in advance. The request should be sent by e-mail to **MRCC Georgia** and include:

- Date time of proposed test.
- Purpose of the test.
- E-mail address of the CSO (or the company) where the CSO requests the MTA to send the acknowledgement of the test message.
- Vessel name and IMO Number.

Please additionally note the following:

- MTA requires a test message **only once a year** or before/during SSAS verification.
- Test messages can be confirmed through 24/7 hours.
- The SSAS test message should, as far as possible, be transmitted at the date and time specified in the Request message.
- The confirmation e-mail of the SSAS test message by MTA shall be retained on board as evidence until the next audit.

4. SSAS Verification and Endorsement of ISSC

4.1. Initial SSAS Verification

The on board installation and operation of the SSAS must be verified within one year of installation by a security auditor from this MTA or the RO that issued the ISSC for a particular vessel. The issuer of the ISSC is already familiar with the SSP and the vessel.

The SSAS equipment and its operation are confidential. In order to maintain the confidentiality of the SSAS, the verification of the SSAS should be conducted by the same organization that issued the ISSC.

The number of individuals involved in review and verification process, and who have knowledge of the location of the activation buttons should be kept to a minimum.

4.2. Verification Procedure

- **Ship Security Plan amendments:** Only those pages in the SSP that relate to the SSAS must be amended. The amended pages and the updated record of changes page shall be submitted to FSI of MTA for review and approval in advance of the on board verification.
- **On board verification by the auditor:** Throughout the SSAS verification, the security auditor will evaluate the procedures outlined in the SSP, interview the Master and SSO on their knowledge of the procedures, and verify the installation and programming of the SSAS.
- In order for ship owners to not incur additional costs, no special attendance is required. The SSAS verification can take place in conjunction with another scheduled inspection, audit or survey provided:
 - The inspector or surveyor is also an authorized security auditor, and
 - The on board verification takes place within one year of the installation.

For example, the on board installation verification can be conducted in conjunction with a Georgian annual safety inspection.

4.3. SSAS Verification Endorsement of ISSC. MTA no longer requires endorsement of the ISSC following SSAS verification. A report or a letter indicating satisfactory verification of SSAS should be retained on board as proof of the verification. This letter will be provided by the auditor on satisfactory completion of the verification.

5. Procedure in case of transmitting false SSAS message:

In instances where the SSAS equipment is verified to be faulty and continues to transmit repeated false alerts, **the designated CSO should notify this MTA** and make urgent arrangements with shore maintenance staff to rectify the technical fault as soon as practically possible.

False SSAS messages should be promptly communicated by the CSO to MTA and rectified as soon as possible. It is also compulsory for the CSO to notify this MTA when the SSAS equipment has been restored to normal operation at the same e-mail address. In the event that a false alert is inadvertently transmitted, immediate actions should be taken by the CSO to ensure that all parties concerned are informed that the alert is false and that no emergency actions are initiated.

Not reporting immediately false alerts to MTA, is a non-compliance with SSAS testing procedure and wrong SSAS recipient setting may result in penalties.

For additional information, Please contact MRCC GEORGIA.

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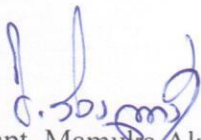
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