

**Fishing Vessel Circular Letter No. 052**

**27 October 2023**

**Series: GEN-2023**

To: All Ship Owners, Operators, Deputy Registrars, Resident Agents, Representatives, and other Stakeholders

Subject: **Issuance of Fishing Vessel Circulars Governing the Activities of Belize Flagged Vessels Engaged in Fishing and Related Activities**

Reference: Issued in accordance with Part VIII, Section 50(1)(c) of the High Seas Fishing Act, 2013

Circular Superseded: FVC-001/2014

**BACKGROUND:**

Fishing vessel circulars serves to provide critical information to fishing vessel owners, operators and other stakeholders about fishing regulations, restrictions and other important information that may affect their fishing activities. These circulars are issued to ensure that fishing vessels operate in a safe and responsible manner and to protect the sustainability of fish stocks and the marine environment.

This circular establishes and describes the use of circulars by the BHSFU to assist with the promulgation of policies and national and international requirements for fishing vessels in respect to safety and compliance with fishing regulations and other related matters not otherwise addressed by the High Sea Fishing Act 2013 and its subsidiary regulations.

**IDENTIFICATION**

To distinguish all circular issued by the BHSFU they shall be identified by the following.

- Circulars shall contain an identification number. **Example Fishing Vessel Circular No. 001**
- The date of issuance of the circular.
- The series which is determined based on the type of circular. Those circulars that refers to conservation and management measures adopted by regional fisheries management organizations shall carry an “RFMO” series identification followed by the year in which it was issued. **Example – Series: RFMO-2023.** Those that refer to any other information shall be identified by “GEN” series followed by the year in which it was issued. **Example Series: GEN-2023.**
- Text that identifies the subject of the Circular.
- A reference to the legislation under which it is being issued. Those RFMO series will reference the management measures issued by the relevant fisheries body. **Example C-001-2013.** Those GEN series will only reference Belize’s national legislation or any other pertinent regulation.

- Where a previous circular is superseded, that circular will be referenced under Circular Superseded.

### **APPLICABILITY**

Circulars setting out mandatory requirements shall be construed to have the same effect and applicability of rules and policies under the provisions of the HSFA 2013. Each circular is applicable to all Belize flagged fishing vessels engaged in fishing and related activities. The owner, operator and master of every Belize flagged fishing vessel shall be familiar with all applicable Circulars applying to their vessel and it shall be no defense that any person in breach of any Circular was not aware of it or has not been advised of it.

### **MAINTENANCE**

Ship owners, and operators shall ensure that all Circulars are disseminated to their master and crew as well as any other person affected by or having an interest in the subject matter in a language understood by all. A Circular one issued shall be disseminated electronically to all stakeholders and a listing of ALL Circulars shall be published on the BHSFU website [www.bhsfu.gov.bz](http://www.bhsfu.gov.bz).

### **COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT**

Failure to comply with any Circular shall result in disciplinary actions taken in accordance with Belize's Sanction Regulations S.I. 32 of 2014

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

All previously issued Circulars issued by the Belize Fisheries Department and the International Merchant Marine Registry as it relates to fishing vessels shall remain valid. These circulars shall have the same effect and applicability of rules and policies promulgated under the provision of the High Seas Fisheries Act 2013 unless repealed and/or superseded.

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

For more information direct all inquiries about this Circular to the Director of High Seas Fisheries of the Belize High Seas Fisheries Unit, Ministry of Finance, Government of Belize.

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Issued by

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