

Fishing Vessel Circular Letter No. 057
07 December 2023
Series: GEN-2023

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

Subject: **LICENSE REQUIREMENTS FOR REEFER VESSELS**

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

Circular Superseded: FVC-004/2014, Issued 1st April 2014

BACKGROUND:

Illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing operations are undermining attempts at sustainable fisheries management, causing damage to the marine environment and jeopardizing the food security and livelihoods of poor coastal communities.

Refrigerated reefer carriers are purposely built to freeze not only frozen goods but also frozen marine resources and allows for the infrastructure for supporting IUU fishing. These vessels will more than likely, at some point in their operation, knowing or unknowingly, carry marine resources from illegal vessels at sea or in port. As a result, and to ensure the sustainability of the marine environment, this Administration has taken a pre-emptive decision which will require that ALL refrigerated reefer carrier vessels comply with the requirements of our High Seas Fishing Act 2013 and its subsidiary regulations.

MANAGEMENT MEASURES

All refrigerated reefer carrier vessels shall be required to obtain a license in accordance with the License Regulations and comply with the additional requirements of our HSFA 2013

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 once 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 for future reference.

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

This circular shall take effect immediately.

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.

Issued by

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