

**Fishing Vessel Circular Letter No. 064**  
**08 December 2023**  
**Series: GEN-2023**

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

Subject: **VESSELS UNDER LAID UP STATUS**

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

Circular Superseded: FVC-023/2017, Issued 24<sup>th</sup> October 2017

## **BACKGROUND**

In May 2014, the BHSFU adopted its Fleet Policy which incorporated several components to streamline the operation of its fleet, including the status of laid up vessels. The Policy states that “no vessel shall be registered where its operational status is undetermined. A vessel may be considered for registration under laid-up status for up to 3 months once its operational plan is submitted and accepted by the BHSFU. A vessel under this status, where its three-month period has expired will be required to request deletion of shall be cancelled ex-officio”. Similarly, vessels already registered that will be laid up for extended periods also fall under this category in accordance with the Fleet Policy.

## **MANAGEMENT MEASURES**

Notwithstanding the above, vessels have continued to exceed their 3 months laid-up status without any clear intention of when they will resume operations. As a result, vessels that wish to be granted an extension after the 3-month period will be required to pay US\$1,500. This fee is non-refundable but will be allocated to the full cost of the license if the vessel commences operation during or at the end of the 3-month period. The fee shall be forfeited if the vessel exceeds the additional 3-months and any request for additional laid up periods will only be considered on a discretionary basis.

## **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](http://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.

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Issued by

**VALARIE LANZA**

Director of High Seas Fisheries

[Director@bhsfu.gov.bz](mailto:Director@bhsfu.gov.bz)

[Valerie.lanza@bhsfu.gov.bz](mailto:Valerie.lanza@bhsfu.gov.bz)

