FLYER TO THE SHIPPING INDUSTRY
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SHIP SECURITY ALERT SYSTEM COMMUNICATIONS

To: All Company Security Officers

1. Background

1.1 Every month the Cayman Islands Shipping Registry (CISR) receives between 10 and 20 "false alerts" from the Ship Security Alert Systems (SSAS) installed on board Cayman Islands ships and yachts.

1.2 These "false alerts" are often generated due to equipment malfunctions, power supply interruptions, "unannounced" tests, and human error. Each alert must be considered as a "live alert" until the actual situation on board is confirmed by the Company.

1.3 With international tensions elevated in areas around the Black Sea, the Strait of Hormuz and elsewhere it is important that, when a SSAS alert is received, the status on board is quickly determined and forwarded to the appropriate authorities.

1.4 Alerts from Cayman Islands ships and yachts are also received by CISR and the 24hr manned National Maritime Operations Centre of the UK Coastguard.

1.5 In recent months CISR and the UK Coastguard have been experiencing increasing difficulties in contacting persons within the vessel's on shore management able to confirm the on board status after an alert message has been received.

2. The "Competent Authority"

2.1 The requirements for Ship Security Alert Systems are contained in SOLAS XI-2, regulation 6.

2.2 SOLAS XI-2/6.2.1 states that the SSAS, when activated, shall –

> "*initiate and transmit a ship-to-shore security alert to a competent authority designated by the Administration, which in these circumstances may include the Company, identifying the ship, its location and indicating that the security of the ship is under threat or it has been compromised;*"

2.3 For Cayman Islands ships and yachts subject to SOLAS XI-2 the "competent authority" is always the Company and the Company Security Officer. The CISR does not designate third parties as the "competent authority" for the receipt of ship-to-shore security alerts.

2.4 In all cases, the responsibility for receiving the alert, determining the status on board and passing this status to CISR and the UK Coastguard lies with the Company and the Company Security Officer (CSO).

2.5 Any failure with respect to the duties of the Company and the CSO in relation to SSAS alerts will be considered as a non conformance relating to the Company's obligations under the ISM Code and may also be considered as an offence under regulation 6 of the Merchant Shipping (Maritime Security) Regulations, 2007.

3. Third Party Service Suppliers

3.1 Many third parties offer services for the receipt and management of SSAS alert messages.

3.2 CISR has no objection to a Company or CSO engaging the services of such third parties subject to the following –

3.2.1 The SSAS alert messages continue to be send directly to the Company or CSO as the "competent authority";

3.2.2 The chosen third party has the competence and capability to respond appropriately to SSAS alert messages at all times, regardless of time zone or geographical location;

3.2.3 The CSO has forwarded 24hr contact details for the chosen third party to CISR; and

3.2.4 On the strict understanding that the Company and CSO are liable for any "failure to perform" on the part of the third party.

3.3 The CISR is also aware that some third-party systems allow the recipients of alerts to be manipulated by the Company such as removal of the CISR or UK Coastguard when sending test alerts. This practice is discouraged as there is potential for the CISR or UK Coastguard to be left off for future 'live' alerts. If this system is adopted this should be designed to fail-safe in that the CISR and UK Coastguard are default recipients in every alert.

3.4 Companies are reminded that the testing of SSAS equipment should be carried out in accordance with MSC/Circ.1155, and in particular –

> "*Ships, Companies, Administrations and recognized security organizations should ensure that when ship security alert systems are to be tested those concerned are notified so that the testing of the ship security alert system does not inadvertently lead to unintended emergency response actions*"; and
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> "*When the ship security alert system accidentally transmits, during testing, a ship security alert, ships, Companies, Administrations and recognized security organizations should act expeditiously to ensure that all concerned parties are made aware that the alert is false and that no emergency response action should be taken*".

4 Actions Required

4.1 Companies are requested to review all contacts and confirm the relevant contact details for the Competent Authority are advised to the CISR.

4.2 If a cascade system is in use, this must be designed to ensure that the Competent Authority can always be reached.

4. Companies are requested to advise the CISR of any third-party arrangements in place and outline the fail-safe arrangements for sending of alerts and for contacting the CSO.