



भारत सरकार / GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
पत्तन, पोत परिवहन और जलमार्ग मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS
नौवहन महानिदेशालय, मुंबई
DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF SHIPPING, MUMBAI

F. No. 16-18011/41/2021-SD-DGS (C. No. 14434)

Dated: 24.07.2024

DG Shipping Circular No. 21 of 2024

Guidelines for deployment of chase and support vessels in Indian Waters/EEZ

Reference: Meeting at DGS Office on 17/04/2024 and Meeting held on 13/12/2017

1. Background:

- Whereas, as per Section 435B of Merchant Shipping Act 1958, as amended (hereinafter referred to as MS Act) the Indian fishing boats can exclusively be engaged in sea fishing for profit;
- Taking into consideration, the rising concerns of safety & security of navigation, environment and human-life, it is of vital importance to regulate the boats, crafts, and vessels that are engaged in offshore projects, inter alia seismic survey projects, upstream/midstream installation & maintenance projects etc., to ensure compliance with the MS Act;

2. Decision Summary:

- In this regard, the Competent Authority, further to the deliberations made in the meeting dated 13/12/2017, which was attended by representatives from INSA, ONGC, Federation of All India Sailing Vessels Industry Associations (FAISVIA), Indian Coastal Conference-Shipping Association (ICCSA), and other stakeholders; where it was decided that only MS Class vessels and Indian mechanized sailing vessels through the Federation of All India Sailing vessels Industry Associations are permitted to be engaged for such works;

3. Immediate Advisory Notice:

- Accordingly, all Indian and foreign project holders and / or their subsidiaries, agents, or sub-contractors while performing survey projects like installation & maintenance, exploration & production, transportation and storage projects in India, in her territorial waters, contiguous zones, continental shelves, exclusive economic zones and other maritime zones shall adhere to the following guidelines:

- They shall not, directly or indirectly; engage any boats, crafts, vessels, that do not comply with the requirements of the MS Act, 1958.
- In case Mechanised Sailing Vessel is used as chase boats, the user shall obtain NOC from the Federation of All India Sailing Vessels Industry Associations (FAISVIA).

4. Prohibition on Use of Fishing Boats:

- Notwithstanding anything contained in the circular, no Indian or foreign project holders shall directly or indirectly engage any Fishing boat/vessel in their seismic survey-related projects.

5. Enforcement and Compliance:

- Any violation of these guidelines reported by the Indian Coast Guard (ICG), Indian Navy, Marine Police, ONGC or any other Govt. agency will result in the immediate detention and provisional cancellation of the license issued to the violating Indian /foreign flag vessel, for enquiry and legal process, if any.
- Further, such foreign flag research vessels shall not be allowed to operate in Indian waters, until any legal process is completed.

6. Undertaking: All companies engaged in conducting various projects, while applying for Specific Purpose License under Sec 406/407 of MS Act, are required to submit an undertaking to adhere to this guidelines as necessary.

7. This is issued with the approval of the Director General of Shipping, Govt. of India, and shall come into force, from the date of issue.


(Shitesh Ranjan)

Ship Surveyor-cum-Deputy Director General of Shipping [SD/Tech]