



ST KITTS & NEVIS INTERNATIONAL SHIP REGISTRY

MARITIME CIRCULAR – MC 15 09 (Rev.1)

SHIP SECURITY ALERT SYSTEM (SSAS)

1. **Purpose**

1.1. The purpose of this Maritime Circular is to provide guidance on the verification procedure of Ship Security Alert Systems (SSAS) by this Administration. This Circular is issued to the attention of Ship Owners, Ship Managers, Ship Operators, Recognised Organisations and Recognised Security Organisations, and other parties involved.

2. **National Authorities Responsible for Ship Security**

2.1. Having entered into force under SOLAS Chapter XI-2, on 1 July 2004, the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code (ISPS Code) has since formed the basis for a comprehensive mandatory security regime for international shipping.

2.2. The SOLAS Regulation XI-2/13 lays down specific obligations for Contracting Governments to the Convention to communicate specified maritime security-related information to the International Maritime Organisation (IMO). Hence, SOLAS Contracting Governments are invited to nominate a single national point of contact to interface with the Organisation for maritime-security matters.

2.3. The Director of Maritime Affairs of St. Kitts and Nevis is the Government official for security related issues. The Director shall set security levels for St. Kitts and Nevis ships.

2.4. The Coast Guard of St. Kitts and Nevis shall set security levels and ensure the provision of security level information to ships operating in the territorial sea of St. Kitts and Nevis or ships that have communicated an intention to enter the territorial sea.

The Coast Guard Point of Contact is:

Email: skndfcg@sisterisles.kn

Tel: +1 869 465 8384 / 466 7312

Fax: +1 869 465 8406

3. **Ship-to-Shore Security Alerts**

3.1. The Ship Security Alert System (SSAS) is a safety measure for strengthening ship's security and subduing acts of piracy and/or terrorism against shipping. As a part of the ISPS Code, the SSAS complements IMO's attempts to increase maritime vessel security.

3.2. The SSAS is a type of silent ship security alarm system which, when activated, does not issue any audio-visual signal on the ship or to nearby vessels or security forces. The alert in most cases is first received by the ship's owner or an SSAS management third party, then passed to the ship's Flag State, and these receivers are obliged to inform the national authorities of the coastal states where the ship is sailing.

3.3. The SOLAS Regulation XI-2/6 requires all vessels to be equipped with SSAS. Only exception are non-passenger vessels of less than 500 GT constructed before 1 July 2004. The SSAS shall meet the

performance standards laid down by *Resolution MSC. 147 (77)*, *Circulars MSC/Circ.1072* and *MSC.1/Circ.1190*.

- 3.4. The Flag State decides who will be the initial recipient of the security alerts from the ships. The recipient may be one or more parties designated by the Flag State as a Competent Authority, which may include the Company (Ship Owner) or a SSAS management third party.
- 3.5. The SSAS, where these are required to be fitted to a ship, should be programmed to transmit the following information:
- Name of ship;
 - IMO Ship Identification Number;
 - The Call Sign of the ship;
 - Maritime Mobile Service Identity (MMSI);
 - The Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) position of the ship in latitude and longitude; and
 - Date and time (UTC) of the alert according to the GNSS position (as per the current time the ship is sailing).
- 3.6. The SSAS, when activated in real mode, must transmit a ship-to-shore security alert (SSA) to the Competent Authority, this being the Company Security Officer (CSO) responsible for the ship or an authorised third party which has been contracted by the Company. The SSA should also be sent to the Department of Maritime Affairs on e-mail address maritimeaffairsskn@gov.kn and to the Flag Head Office on e-mail address mail@skanregistry.com.
- 3.7. When received by the Competent Authority, the SSA should be verified whether it is genuine or not.
- 3.8. The Competent Authority should then send a further e-mail to the Department of Maritime Affairs and to the International Ship Registry to advise whether the SSA is genuine, a false alarm or a test message. This further e-mail should be sent as soon as possible.

4. If the SSA is genuine

- 4.1. Once the alert is received and confirmed as genuine, the Competent Authority should e-mail to the Department of Maritime Affairs a copy of the crew list and advise the cargo type(s) and quantity(s) on board and any other relevant information.
- 4.2. After receiving a message confirming that the SSA is genuine, the Department of Maritime Affairs:
- Will access the IMO Database to establish contact details of the nearby coastal states;
 - The coastal states will be advised that a security alert has been received from the ship and the ship's position;
 - The Director of Maritime Affairs will then liaise with the Competent Authority, St. Kitts and Nevis Coast Guard and the coastal states for further action.

5. Use of authorised third parties for receipt of SSA

- 5.1. St. Kitts and Nevis Administration recognises that certain Ship Owners and Ship Managers may have difficulty in monitoring SSAs generated by their ships. With this in mind, this Administration recommends that Ship Owners and Ship Managers use a 24/7/365 SSA monitoring service in addition to their own CSO service.
- 5.2. A list of authorised third parties can be found on our website following this link

<https://www.skanregistry.com/en/security-anti-piracy#:~:text=USE%20OF%20AUTHORISED%20THIRD%20PARTIES%20FOR%20RECEIPT%20OF%20SSA%27S>

5.3. However, notwithstanding this recommendation the ultimate responsibility for advising the Department of Maritime Affairs of ship security alerts and any contravention of the Merchant Shipping (Ship & Port Facility Security) Regulations, 2004 rests with the Company and the Master.

6. Type Approval of Ship Security Alert Systems

6.1. The SSAS are required to conform to performance standards identified in the SOLAS Regulation XI-2/6. Standards are not to be inferior to those adopted by IMO Resolutions *MSC. 136(76)* revised by *MSC. 147(77)*, and *A.694(17)*.

6.2. There are no provisions in the SOLAS Regulation XI-2/6 for Administrations to type approve the SSAS. St. Kitts and Nevis Administration is therefore unable to type approve any SSAS. Ship specific systems will be reviewed by the Recognised Organisation on behalf of this Administration and approved as part of the ship's security system verification.

7. Testing of SSAS

7.1. The SSAS should be tested to ensure it is working properly, as the functionality of the SSAS is crucial in case of a real emergency. Hence, this Administration requires that an activation of the SSAS in real mode be carried out as soon as the system has been initially commissioned. Thereafter, the SSAS shall be tested (activation of the system in real mode) annually, either as a part of the annual ship security exercise or independently, i.e. once between the calendar months January to December.

7.2. Also the SSAS should be tested (activation of the system in real mode) when a ship changes management company or service provider.

7.3. When testing SSASs, the provisions of paragraphs II.3 and II.4 of the annex to *MSC/Circ.1155 on Guidance on the message priority and the testing of ship security alert systems* should be observed.

8. Recommendations

8.1. The records of real SSAs, including confirmations from the Administration, should be available for examination during shore-based verifications of the Safety Management System of the Company by the RO issuing the Document of Compliance of the Company as per the provisions of the ISM Code.

8.2. This Administration invites all parties involved to familiarise themselves with the above stated information and the IMO requirements governing SSAS, as stipulated in the IMO documents referenced in this Circular, namely SOLAS Chapter XI-2/Reg. 6, IMO Resolution *MSC.147(77)*, IMO Circulars *MSC/Circ.1072*, *MSC.1/Circ.1190* and *MSC/Circ.1155*.

If you have any questions on this matter, please contact this office at mail@skanregistry.com

Yours truly,

Mr. Liam Ryan
International Registrar of Shipping and Seamen