

CIRCULAR N.º 58 | Rev. 3**PORTUGUESE MARITIME ADMINISTRATION**

SUBJECT | Ship's Names and Marking Inscriptions

To | Shipowners, Companies, Operators, Masters, Skippers, Associations and Organisations of merchant shipping and recreational sectors, Recognized Organizations and Ship Inspectors

DISCLAIMER | This document is for information only and is not intended to interpret or replace the legal referenced documents published by official sources

REFERENCES | Decree-Law n.º 43/2018, of the 18th June, on the National System of Vessels and Seafarers and the Balcão Eletrónico do Mar (www.bmar.pt); Decree-Law n.º 92/2018, of the 13th November, which establishes, among others, a simplified regime of registry of ships and vessels; Decree-Law n.º 93/2018, of the 13th November, which approves the new legal framework of the pleasure boating; Ordinance n.º 8/2020, of the 16th January, which approve the lay-outs of the pleasure crafts booklets, both in electronic and hard copy format; Decree-Law n.º 73/202, of the 23rd September, which establishes, among others, the legal framework of the registry of fishing ships and vessels, used for commercial fishing.

1. OBJECTIVE

It is intended with the present circular to give some information about the marking inscriptions on ships and vessels encompassed by this document.

For ships and vessels under the chapeau of Decree-Law n.º 92/2018, of the 13th November, these guidelines on inscriptions are valid until the publication of the regulatory rules, which will be published by the Ordinance set out in article 12 of the Decree-Law.

It is also intended to lay down some rules on the approval of vessel's names.

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PORTUGUESE MARITIME ADMINISTRATION

2. MARITIME ADMINISTRATION HARMONIZED PROCEDURES

Currently some of the information related with the obtaining of licenses, surveys, certification, registry of ships and other maritime activities related aspects, as well as with seafarer's registration, is fragmented on a complex and inadequate system far from both international best practices and regulatory and technological developments.

The Ships and Seafarers National System (SNEM) was established to embody a national solution of improving and speeding up the Administration level of response, as a public and electronic centralized data system with the purpose of informing and maintain up to date all data related with ships, seafarers and other maritime activities related matters assuming an horizontal access of all entities with substantive competencies within procedures.

For this purpose the Balcão Eletrónico do Mar will have some services available (www.bmar.pt) where citizens and business may apply on a 24/7 basis DGRM's and its associated partners' services, receiving their answers the same way. Having in due consideration the requests, all applications submitted will be forwarded to the competent body providing a permanent and immediate update of SNEM in order to be available to the public in general through BMar.

This way a more transparent, safe and faster relationship with the Public Service will be accomplished, reducing costs and enhancing competitiveness.

3. MARKING OF INSCRIPTIONS ON VESSELS

The national legislation related with pleasure craft and commercial vessels' registration came into force on January 1st 2019, establishing also the requirements related with the inscriptions' marking.

While the regulamentary rules envisaged on article 12 of Decree-Law n.º 93/2018 are not published, the exception to the revoking rules prescribed on article 32 are not quite clear, thus making it necessary to clarify the understanding of the Maritime Administration on the issue, in order to make it understandable and applicable by all, which is fundamental for database interoperability and service harmonisation.

Guidelines on possible ways of marking recreational craft will be given, considering the variety of these crafts in dimensions and shapes.

On January 1st 2021 a new Decree-Law with the same scope but referring only to fishing vessels' registry entered into force. In this case the marking of fishing ships and vessels will be done in



PORTUGUESE MARITIME ADMINISTRATION

accordance with the Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 404/2011, of 8 of April, in its most recent text

3.1 RECREATIONAL CRAFT

3.1.1 Identification set

Recreational crafts are identified by the identification set¹, which is composed sequentially by the name, registry number and the indicative digit for the type of boat according to the navigational area followed by the capitals «PT».

On an automated and sequential manner the registry number is assigned by SNEM, established by Decree-Law n.º 43/2018 of the 18th June. Whenever a deletion of the registration happens the registry number cannot be reassigned to any other vessel or boat.

The registry number and the indicative digit for the type of boat according to the navigational area are marked separated by a dash. According to Ordinance n.º 8/2020 of 16th January, the identification group will be displayed as follows:

NOME - ##### - \$PT

where:

- NOME - title or registered name of the recreational craft. Only the letters of the Roman alphabet as well as Roman and Arabic numerals are allowed;
- ##### - The recreational craft's registry number, i.e. the SNEM number;
- \$ - it means the indicative digit for the type of boat according to the navigational area and may assume the following values: 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5, in accordance with article 8 of Decree-Law n.º 93/2018 of 13th November. Both name and registry number of the boat as well as the registry number and the indicative digit are separated by a DASH²
- PT - Letters which identify the vessel's registry country, PORTUGAL.

¹ As written on article 11 n.º 1 of Decree-Law n.º 93/2018 of the 13th November.

² DASH, means the hyphen, ASCII Code 45



PORTUGUESE MARITIME ADMINISTRATION

3.1.2 Inscriptions

On recreational craft the identification set shall be marked with both legible and contrasting coloured characters on the stern of the boat. The identification set characters will have a minimum height of 6 cm on type 5 boats and of 10 cm on all others.

Type 1, 2, 3 or 4 boats shall have visibly marked on their side, both port and starboard side or in pelmets only the name. As an example, the marking of a recreational craft classified as a type 3 navigational area, for which the registry number 000001 was assigned and having the registered name NOME, may be placed as follows:



or



PORTUGUESE MARITIME ADMINISTRATION

Stern inscriptions may be placed as follows:



For all pleasure boats and whenever the marking of the identification set astern on a legible manner is not possible, it should be marked on both port and starboard quarter. An example is given for a type 5 recreational craft with NOME as registered name.



3.1.3 Recreational crafts adapted forms of inscriptions' marking

The external inscriptions on boats of either traditional construction or old boats may be adapted to their original layout, as long as authorized by DGRM³. Submissions should be made through Bmar, in *Categoria do Pedido: Embarcações* and for *Tipo do Pedido: Formas*

³ As described in paragraph 8 of article 13 of DL 93/2018, of 13th November

PORTUGUESE MARITIME ADMINISTRATION

adaptadas de marcação de Inscrições. A summary of what is required along with the justification of it by adding photographs of the boat where the original inscriptions are seen, together with the proposal of marking the inscriptions in such a manner it allows a technical assessment of the request.

3.1.4 Boats used for Ludic Fishing

According to article 7 n.º 1 of Ordinance n.º 14/2014 of the 23rd January only recreational crafts, whether or not pursuing maritime-tourism activity, are allowed for ludic fishing activity. Hence and as an example, a kayak boat has to be registered as a recreational craft in order to practice ludic fishing and consequently the inscriptions should be marked as written above.

3.2 MERCHANT SHIPS, TUGS, SCIENTIFIC AND AUXILIARY SHIPS OR VESSELS

3.2.1 Identification set

All ships and vessels covered by Decree-Law n.º 92/2018 of 13th November are identified by an identification set⁴ containing the following elements:

- a) «PORTUGAL» and acronym «PT»;
- b) The registry number;
- c) Ship's or vessel's name;
- d) Where applicable, letter indicating the ship's or vessel's activity.

On an automated and sequential manner the registry number is assigned by SNEM, established by Decree-Law n.º 43/2018 of 18th June. Whenever a deletion of the registration happens the registry number cannot be reassigned ever again to any other vessel or boat. As previously mentioned the identification set of a merchant ship, tug, scientific or auxiliary ship will be displayed as follows:

PT - ##### - NOME - ZZ

⁴ As described by article 12 n.º 1 of Decree-Law 92/2018 of 13th November



PORTUGUESE MARITIME ADMINISTRATION

where:

- PT - Letters which identify the vessel's country of registry, PORTUGAL;
- ##### - The ship or vessel's registry number, i.e. the SNEM number;
- NOME - The ship or vessel's approved name;
- ZZ - The ship or vessel's activity letters acronym;

The separation of each part of the identification set is done by SPACE⁵ DASH⁶ SPACE.

The ship or vessel's activity letters acronym (ZZ) are the following:

- a) Local traffic, displayed by the acronym «TL»;
- b) Tugs:
 - i. Local, displayed by the acronym «RL»;
 - ii. Coastal, displayed by the acronym «RC»;
 - iii. Deep-sea, displayed by the acronym «RA».
- c) Auxiliary:
 - i. Local, displayed by the acronym «AL»;
 - ii. Coastal, displayed by the acronym «AC»;
 - iii. Deep-sea, displayed by the acronym «AA».
- d) State, displayed by the acronym «EST»;
- e) Additionally and with the exception of State vessel's, any high speed vessel shall display the acronym «EAV» (PT - ##### - NOME - ZZ EAV). The inscriptions should be marked by the shipowner before DGRM issues the declaration specified by article 11 n.º 3 of Decree-Law n.º 92/2018 of 13th November.

3.2.2 Inscriptions

On every ship or vessel where either the regulations established by international conventions or the European Union regulations or legislation apply, the following inscriptions should be marked:

⁵ SPACE means space with ASCII Code 32

⁶ DASH means the hyphen with ASCII Code 45



PORTUGUESE MARITIME ADMINISTRATION

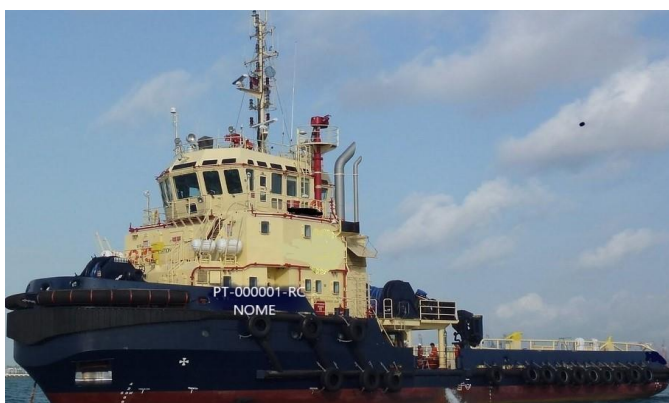
- a) Name;
- b) The word «PORTUGAL»;
- c) The ship identification number scheme adopted by the International Maritime Organization (IMO);
- d) Draught scale;
- e) Freeboard and load lines.

The inscriptions to be marked on every vessel for which the previous number does not apply are:

- a) Name;
- b) Registry number or identification group;
- c) The word «PORTUGAL»;
- d) Draught scale;
- e) Freeboard and load lines.

Freeboard and load lines are used and marked according with both international conventions and national legislation.

As an example, for a Coastal area registered Tug (RC), whose approved name is NOME and registry number is 000001, as the regulations established in international conventions or in European Union regulations or legislation are not applicable, the inscriptions should be as shown in the associated pictures:



bow



stern

PORTUGUESE MARITIME ADMINISTRATION

On ships or vessels where the ship identification number scheme adopted by the International Maritime Organization applies and if the IMO number is 9765432, the bow and stern inscriptions will be as follows:



bow



stern

3.3 FISHING VESSELS' INSCRIPTIONS

3.3.1 Identification set

All ships and fishing vessels covered by Decree-Law n.º 73/2020 of 23rd September are identified by an identification set⁷ containing the following elements:

- a) Acronym PT followed by the abbreviation of the port of reference;
- b) Registry number;

⁷ As described by article 26 n.º 1 and 2 of Decree-Law 73/2020 of 23 September.



PORTUGUESE MARITIME ADMINISTRATION

- c) Letter referring the ship or vessel's activity classification⁸;
- d) Name of the ship or vessel.

On an automated and sequential manner the registry number is assigned by SNEM, established by Decree-Law n.º 43/2018 of 18th June. Whenever a deletion of the registration happens the registry number cannot be reassigned ever again to any other vessel or boat. The identification set of a fishing vessel will be displayed as follows:

PT\$\$\$-#####-Z NOME

onde:

- PT - acronym indicating the registry country of the vessel, Portugal;
- \$\$\$ - the three letters which identify the vessel's port of reference within the UN/LOCODE⁹ classification system;
- ##### - the ship or vessel's registry number, i.e. the SNEM number;
- Z - letter referring the ship or vessel's activity area;
- NOME - the approved name of the fishing ship or vessel.

In the identification set there will be no space between the acronym «PT» and the three code letters which identify the vessel's port of reference in the UN/LOCODE classification system. The remaining parts of the identification set are separated by a DASH¹⁰.

The letters referring to the ship or vessel's activity area (Z) are the following:

- a) Local Fisheries, designated by the «L» letter;
- b) Coastal Fisheries, designated by the «C» letter;
- c) Deep-Sea Fisheries, designated by the «N» letter.

If the name corresponding to the location of the port of reference where the vessel is registered does not have a UN/LOCODE, the code corresponding to the Capitania to which the port of reference belongs should be used. Let us suppose that a Local Fishing Vessel named MARTINHO

⁸ As described by article 25 n.º 2 of Decree-Law n.º 73/2020 of 23 September

⁹ UN/LOCODE is the United Nations Code for Trade and Transport locations managed by the UNECE and the result of country collaboration including over 100,000 locations in 249 countries and territories. Available in <https://unece.org/trade/cefact/unlocode-code-list-country-and-territory>

¹⁰ DASH, means the hyphen with ASCII code 45.



PORTUGUESE MARITIME ADMINISTRATION

with the SNEM nº 100000 has as port of reference a small village named S. Martinho das Arestas. As there is no code assigned to S. Martinho das Arestas in the UN/LOCODE list and as it belongs to the jurisdiction of the Capitania of Nazaré, the port of reference code to be used is that of Nazaré, i.e. NAZ. The identification set of this vessel will be PTNAZ-100000-L MARTINHO.

3.3.2 Inscriptions

The marking of fishing ships or vessels shall be carried out in accordance with Implementing Regulation (EU) No 404/2011 of the Commission of 8 April 2011, as amended. The information contained in this circular does not exempt the consultation of the aforementioned Regulation, which on its Article 6 sets out how the markings on fishing vessels should be affixed, as well as their dimensions.

The letters identifying the port of reference in which the fishing vessel is registered for management and control of fishing effort purposes, along with the registration numbers and the letter corresponding to the activity area shall be painted or displayed on both sides of the bow, as high above the water as possible so as to be clearly visible from the sea and the air, in a colour contrasting with the background on which they are painted. The contrasting colours shall be white and black.

Both the letters and numbers height and width of the line to be painted or fixed on fishing ships or vessels shall be respectively:

- a) on fishing vessels of less than 10 metres length overall the height of the letters and numbers shall be at least 10 centimetres with a proportionate line thickness;
- b) on fishing vessels over 10 metres length overall and less than 17 metres length overall, the height of the letters and numbers shall be at least 25 centimetres with a line thickness of at least 4 centimetres;
- c) on fishing vessels of 17 metres length overall or more, the height of the letters and numbers shall be at least 45 centimetres, with a line thickness of at least 6 centimetres.

As an example, for a Local fishing vessel having Nazaré as its port of reference (UN/LOCODE NAZ) called MESTRE SABICHÃO and registry number 100000, the inscriptions marked in both sides of the bow will be:



PORTUGUESE MARITIME ADMINISTRATION



For a deep-sea fishing vessel called ADAMASTOR, with a registry number 100000 and having VIANA DO CASTELO as port of reference (UN/LOCODE VDC), the inscriptions marking at both sides of the bow will be:



PORTUGUESE MARITIME ADMINISTRATION

On Fishing ships and vessels the inscriptions to be marked at the stern follow the abovementioned nomenclature as merchant ships and vessels, tugboats, auxiliaries, etc.:

- a) Name;
- b) The word «PORTUGAL».

On vessels falling under the requirements laid down in international conventions or European Union laws or regulations, or in any special national legislation, the following markings may also have to be painted or displayed, which shall be done in accordance with the same rules as those used for commercial vessels:

- c) The ship identification number scheme adopted by the International Maritime Organization (IMO);
- d) Draught scale;
- e) Freeboard and load lines.

As an example, the stern marks on a fishing vessel called PRAIA DO ABANO which does not comply with the ship identification number scheme adopted by IMO will be:



PORTUGUESE MARITIME ADMINISTRATION

If and instead of a stern-panel fishing vessel it were a trawl-rigged fishing vessel, due the IMO ship identification system number, named PRAIA DO AÇUDE, with IMO No. 8567467 we would have:



The external registration letters and numbers painted or displayed on the hull of the ship or fishing vessel shall not be removable, effaced, altered, illegible, covered or concealed.

4. SHIP'S AND VESSEL'S NAME

Ship's and vessel's names should be distinct from each other and not liable of confusion or mistake when considering those already registered and expressions usually considered as offensives¹¹ are also not allowed. Also article 4 of Decree-Law n.º 201/98 of the 10th July, defining the legal status of ships states on its n.º 1 and n.º 2 that “all ships shall be assigned a name” (n.º 1) and also “the name to be assigned is subject to prior approval of the competent public service and shall be distinct from all others already registered” (N.º 2). **NOME** as mentioned either by article 12 point (c) of Decree-Law n.º 92/2018 or by article 11 point (a) of Decree-Law n.º 93/2018 should be a word which defines creatures, things, qualities, states or actions. In grammatical terms the name falls under the nominal core group which indicates either real entities (person, object, animal, etc.) or abstract entities (action, state, quality, etc.) varying by gender, number or grade.

¹¹ Refer to article 12 n.º 2 of Decree-Law n.º 92/2018 and article 12 n.º 2 of Decree-Law n.º 93/2018 of the 13th November.

PORTUGUESE MARITIME ADMINISTRATION

Having in mind the emergency situations that may happen at sea and for response safety reasons it is not possible to authorize the assignment of names consisting exclusively either by letters or by a set of letters which may be mistaken with codes, as shown in the following examples:

- i. FWD
- ii. XS
- iii. F-ONE
- iv. T-ROK
- v. CS
- vi. FN
- vii. VC
- viii. I-PHONE
- ix. SS
- x. NNN
- xi. SOS
- xii. F1
- xiii. JB
- xiv. CMB

Having as a reference the international limits of the fieldname's length of ships, the assigned names will have a maximum of 70 characters including spaces.

The names may contain:

- Accentuation - 10 characters example: “São Lázaro” (the space between the two words is counted as a character);
- Apostrophe - example: “PASTA D’ÁGUA” (the apostrophe is counted as a character);
- Hyphen - example: “Trás-os-Montes” (the hyphen is counted as a character).

Names are not allowed with:

- Symbols: #, \$, @, &, ”, *, / among others;
- Orthographic signals which are not considered punctuation.



PORTUGUESE MARITIME ADMINISTRATION

For clarity reasons all references to inscriptions or identification groups will be presented in upper case letters as well as all ships and vessels' documentation.

Done in Lisbon on 13th April 2021

The General Director of Natural Resources, Safety and Maritime Services

More information

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