

**CIRCULAR No. 58 | REV. 2****PORTUGUESE MARITIME ADMINISTRATION**

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**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 no. 43/2018, of the 18th June, which establishes the National System of Vessels and Seafarers and the Balcão Eletrónico do Mar ([www.bmar.pt](http://www.bmar.pt)); Decree-Law no. 92/2018, of the 13th November, which establishes a new regime of taxation base on the ships' and vessels' Tonnage, a fiscal and contributory regime for seafarers and a simplified registry of ships and vessels; Decree-Law no. 93/2018, of the 13th November, which approves the new Legal Framework of the Recreational Navigation; Ordinance no. 8/2020, of the 16th January, which approve the lay-outs, both in electronic format and hard copy, of the recreational craft booklets

**1. OBJECTIVE**

It is intended with the present circular to provide information about marking inscriptions on ships and vessels, during the transitional period between the publication of the regulations set out in References above and their regulametary instruments, as well as some rules related with the approval of ship's names.

**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 seafarers registration is fragmented on a complex and inadequate system far from both international best practices and regulatory and technological developments.

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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](http://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 the vessels' marking inscriptions requirements.

However the procedure perform to mark the inscriptions on vessels encompassed by Decree-Law no. 92/2018 is not quite clear.

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

**3.1 Recreational Craft**

Recreational crafts are identified by the identification group<sup>1</sup>, comprising on a sequence 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 no. 43/2018 of the 18<sup>th</sup> June. Whenever a deletion of the registration happens the registry number cannot be assigned ever again to any other vessel or boat.

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

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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 no. 8/2020 of the 16<sup>th</sup> 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 no. 93/2018 of the 13<sup>th</sup> November. Both the name and the registry number of the boat as well as the registry number and the indicative digit are separated by a DASH<sup>2</sup>
- PT - Letters which identify the vessel's registry country, PORTUGAL.

On recreational craft the identification group shall be marked with both legible and contrasting coloured characters on the stern of the boat. The identification group 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 both of its sides or in pelmets only the name.

As an example, the marking on the side of a recreational craft with the registry number 000001, classified as a type 3 navigational area and to which the registered name is NOME may be placed as follows:

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<sup>2</sup> DASH, means the hipen, ASCII Code 45

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Stern inscriptions may be placed as follows:



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

**3.1.1 Marking of inscriptions - adapted forms**

The external inscriptions on boats of traditional construction may be adapted to their original layout, as long as authorized by DGRM. The request can be done through BMar.

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Alternatively and in case of unavailability of BMar, the application may be sent by email to [dsam.requerimentos@dgrm.mm.gov.pt](mailto:dsam.requerimentos@dgrm.mm.gov.pt) adding the necessary technical elements needed to do the assessment.

**3.1.2 Boats used for Ludic Fishing**

According to article 7 no. 1 of Ordinance no. 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**

Article 7 no. 1 of Decree-Law no. 92/2018 of the 13<sup>th</sup> November states that both ships and vessels are identified with an identification group containing the following elements:

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

**3.3 INSCRIPTIONS IN MERCHANT SHIPS OR VESSELS, TUGS, SCIENTIFIC AND AUXILIARY SHIPS OR VESSELS****3.3.1 Identification group**

On an automated and sequential manner the registry number is assigned by SNEM, established by Decree-Law no. 43/2018 of the 18<sup>th</sup> June. Whenever a deletion of the registration happens the registry number cannot be assigned ever again to any other vessel or boat. As previously mentioned the identification group of a merchant ship, tug, scientific or auxiliary ship will be displayed as follows:

**PT - ##### - NOME - ZZ**

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where:

- PT - Letters which identify the vessel's registry country, 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 group is done by Espaço<sup>3</sup> TRAÇO<sup>4</sup> Espaço.

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 no. 3 of Decree-Law no. 92/2018 of the 13th November.

### 3.3.2 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:

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<sup>3</sup> ESPAÇO means space with ASCII Code 32

<sup>4</sup> TRAÇO means the hyphen with ASCII Code 45

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- 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.

In addition to the above mentioned inscriptions, authorization may be granted to mark monograms related with regional traditions, as long as they don't prejudice the correct identification of either ship or vessel.

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:

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*bow*



*stern*

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 stern inscriptions will be:



*stern*

**3.4 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 offensives<sup>5</sup> are also not allowed. Also article 4 of Decree-Law no. 201/98 of the 10th July,

<sup>5</sup> 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.

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defining the legal status of ships states on its no. 1 and n.º 2 that “all ships shall be assigned a name” (no. 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” (No. 2). **NOME** as mentioned either by article 12 point (c) of Decree-Law no. 92/2018 or by article 11 point (a) of Decree-Law no. 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.

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);

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- 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.

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.

Lisbon, 13 April 2020

The General Director of Natural Resources, Safety and Maritime Services

**For further information please contact:**

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