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# Guidelines for vessel under Panama Flag, geopolitical conflict Ukrainian and Russian Waters in The Black Sea and Sea of Azov

Notice to: Ship Owners/ Managers/ Operators

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The Panama Maritime Administration issued a notice with the number MMN-03/2022 which strongly recommends for Panamanian-flagged vessels to take all security measures and avoid transiting through Ukrainian and Russian waters in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov.

On July 22, 2022, the Republic of Turkey, the Russian Federation, Ukraine and the United Nations signed the initiative on the safe export of food and fertilizers, including ammonia, from Ukrainian ports.

The Joint Coordination Centre (JCC) of the UN's Black Sea Grain Initiative has approved the "Procedures for Merchant Vessels". The procedures are mandatory requirements pursuant to the SOLAS Regulation XI-2/11 and the ISPS Code, Part A, section 4.2 and Part B, section 4.26, as a condition of port entry or departure to or from the Ukrainian ports.

The humanitarian maritime corridor is 111 nautical miles long and 3 nautical miles wide. Vessels authorized by the Joint Coordination Center to circulate through the corridor must remain in the corridor or in defined holding areas off the Ukrainian and Turkish coasts.

Shipping companies that decide to move their ships based on business activity and procedures must apply to the Ukrainian port authorities and follow the complete instructions of the **BLACK SEA GRAIN INITIATIVE**

– [JOINT COORDINATION CENTRE PROCEDURES FOR MERCHANT VESSEL](#). The Joint Coordination Center will authorize the movement of ships in and out of the Black Sea based on such requests.

In case of any Panamanian registry vessel that wishes to apply for departure from Ukrainian ports and their technical certificates are expired or audits/inspections have not been carried out, they must contact the Panama Maritime Authority, Segumar Offices ([extensions@segumar.com](mailto:extensions@segumar.com) or [conditionals@segumar.com](mailto:conditionals@segumar.com)) for the corresponding instruction. For more information see the [Black Sea Grain Initiative Joint Coordination Centre Frequently Asked Questions](#).

The Panama Maritime Authority, aware of the situation, is in constant communication with the International Maritime Organization to ensure and guarantee a safe exit for all ships that are within Ukrainian and Russian waters in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, including port facilities.

Due to the current situation in the areas of the Black Sea, Sea of Azov and its surroundings, the Panama Maritime Administration requires all Panama registered vessels to raise the level of security according to the ship's Security Plan and to take extreme measures of safety and security for both the ship and its crew.

The Sea of Azov remains closed for navigation, although some vessels are allowed by Russian authorities to transit the area. I.

For those Panamanian vessels in Ukrainian Ports or transiting the above zone must keep the utmost vigilance and increase security conditions aboard too protect the vessel and its crew.

Port operations in the ports of Ukraine are limited and intended for the transport of grains, as expressed in international media, for which the Panama registered vessels that are in these ports and their crews must remain in port until the Ukrainian authorities grant permission for departure or disembarkment of the crew. During their stay in port, they must implement all security measures equivalent to Security Level III, as required in their Ship Security Plan in accordance with the ISPS Code. Currently, ships are not allowed to enter or leave the ports.

It is reaffirmed to avoid any transit or operation within the Black Sea, Sea of Azov and its surroundings.

For safety, the automatic identification system (AIS) and the LRIT must be always turned on except in those cases where the captain considers that the security of the vessel could be compromised or when a security incident is imminent. In accordance with the provisions of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), in the same way, VHF Channel 16 must be monitored and communication must be maintained at all times with local authorities and with the Panama Maritime Administration.

The boarding of security companies that provide armed personnel on board Panama registered vessels in Ukrainian and Russian waters is prohibited.

We recommend that all vessels follow the instructions of the local authorities regarding the transit of the crew in port areas. Review your communication security plan on board, in case of an unforeseen incident.

## Act now

Ship Owners / Managers / Operators of vessels we recommend that all vessels follow the instructions of the local authorities regarding the transit of the crew in port areas. Review your communication security plan on board, in case of an unforeseen incident.

The Panama Maritime Administration through with notice MMN-03/2022 strongly encourage following the recommendations listed below and, on the document issued by members of the maritime industry and stake holders, including the information posted in <https://channel16.dryadglobal.com/risk-of-collateral-damage-in-northwest-black-sea-mine-warning-areas>.

- Undertake a new ship- and voyage-specific threat risk assessment before entering any region where there has been an incident, or the threat has changed.
- After the risk assessment, review the Ship's Security Plan.
- Review section 2 of BMP5, which outlines non-piracy threats and the Global Counter-Piracy Guidance.
- Maintain a full and vigilant bridge watches.
- Maintain a strict communication watch and establish communication with all vessels coming close.
- Ensure strict boarding controls in place.
- Only lower accommodation gangways or ladders when necessary.
- Rig outboard lighting where possible provided when they do not interfere with keeping a safe lookout, particularly over the stern and rig/use searchlights if available.
- Monitoring Channel 16 t VHF and other communication channels.
- Review communication notices on mined areas at [NAVAREA III warnings in force \(defensa.gob.es\)](https://defensa.gob.es).
- Check all fire-fighting equipment available for immediate use. Make sure the emergency fire pump is available if any maintenance is being undertaken.
- Keep the Automatic Information System (AIS) and LRIT working properly, in order to be able to continuously send positions of the vessels.