

Fraudulent registration and fraudulent registries of ships

Legal Affairs and External Relations Division
Ms. Dorota Lost-Sieminska
Director, Legal Affairs and External Relations Division

IMO's Strategic Plan – Strategic directions to 2029

- 1 Ensure implementation of IMO instruments supported by capacity building
Output 1.31: Measures to prevent unlawful practices associated with the fraudulent registration and fraudulent registries of ships
- 2 Integrate new, emerging and advancing technologies in the regulatory framework
- 3 Respond to climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from international shipping
- 4 Continue to engage in ocean governance
- 5 Enhance global facilitation, supply chain resilience and security of international trade
- 6 Address the human element
- 7 Ensure regulatory effectiveness of international shipping
- 8 Ensure organizational effectiveness

Fraudulent registration/registries of ships – initial discussions

- July 2015 – IMO Secretariat became aware of the fraudulent Micronesia International Ship Registry (MISR)
- April 2017 – 104th session of the Legal Committee
 - Problem brought to the attention of the Legal Committee by the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)
- 2018 – 105th session of the Legal Committee
 - Proposal to add a new output submitted by Cyprus, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Fiji, Germany, Morocco, Spain and Vanuatu
- 2019 – 106th session of the Legal Committee
 - Reports on cases of fraudulent registration and fraudulent registries of ships


Fraudulent registration/registries of ships – Outcome of LEG 106 and Assembly 31 in 2019

- Assembly resolution on Measures to prevent the fraudulent registration and fraudulent registries of ships (A.1142(31))
 - The resolution includes a procedure for communicating information on ship registries to IMO, including information on the name of national governmental body(ies) and authorized or delegated entities in charge of ship registration. Its aim is to allow the IMO Secretariat to verify the information, through the appropriate channels
 - GISIS – Module on registries
- Recommended best practices to assist in combating fraudulent registration and fraudulent registries of ships covering:
 - verifying IMO numbers of vessels when receiving an application for registration;
 - ensuring Flag State Administration contact point information is up-to-date;
 - ensuring the application of the requirement for the Continuous Synopsis Record;
 - a recommendation for prospective flag States to review the United Nations Security Council Sanctions List Search webpage at <https://scsanctions.un.org/search/>; and
 - verifying the relevant information pertaining to Registries of ships in the “Contact Points” module in GISIS

Fraudulent registration/registries of ships – Outcome of LEG 107 (in 2020), LEG 108 (in 2021) and Assembly 32 (in 2021)

- Definitions of:
 - "fraudulent registration" means the unauthorized use of a country's flag;
 - unauthorized use may include registration of ships in violation or in excess of the authority granted by the flag State; and
 - "fraudulent registry" means an entity or other person, purporting to register ships, without being authorized by the Government of the flag State.
- GISIS module on Ship and Company Particulars:
 - “False” flag: if a Flag Administration advises that a ship continues to fly / broadcast (via AIS) flag information after cancellation / deletion, then the ship shows a FALSE flag (e.g. FALSE Guyana)


GISIS “False flags”



INTERNATIONAL
MARITIME
ORGANIZATION

GISIS: Ship and Company Particulars

Secretariat Area > Ship and Company Particulars



Ships

Ship IMO Number:

IMO

Ship name:

☒ Search former name ☐ Exact name

Flag Administration:

Call sign:

MMSI:

Status of ship:

☒ In service only ☐ Any (broken up, total loss, etc)

Ship Status:

☒ False Flag
☐ Ship under UN sanction
☐ Owning/operating entity under UN Sanction

Search

Advanced search »

Ship Results

IMO Number	Name	Flag	Type
IMO 6821872	ADRIATIC	Curacao False	Other Offshore
IMO 7506613	AJAX	Guyana False	Towing/Pushing
IMO 7106994	ALMABROUKA-11	Sao Tome & Principe False	General Cargo
IMO 7105421	AMARGI	Congo (Democratic Republic) False	Oil
IMO 1048190	ANGEL 66	Eswatini False	General Cargo
IMO 7302964	BOMARIS LEGEND	Congo (Democratic Republic) False	Ro-Ro Cargo
IMO 6607460	BRASAL SUPPORTER	Congo (Democratic Republic) False	Other Offshore
IMO 1091898	CARTIER	Guyana False	Bulk Dry
IMO 7304310	DEUS	Curacao False	Oil



INTERNATIONAL
MARITIME
ORGANIZATION

Fraudulent registration/registries of ships – Outcome of Assembly 32 (in 2021)

- Assembly resolution on Encouragement of Member States and all relevant stakeholders to promote actions for the prevention and suppression of fraudulent registration and fraudulent registries of ships and other fraudulent acts in the maritime sector (A.1162(32)):
 - encourages Governments to review the provisions in their national law relating to the prevention and suppression of all forms of maritime fraud, having particular regard to, inter alia, the administration of national registries of ships, including requirements for provisional registration, transfer of ownership, nationality, or change of name of ships;
 - urges Governments to take all possible measures of cooperation with each other and with relevant intergovernmental organizations and maritime stakeholders in order to combat maritime fraud, including the exchange of information and reporting the names of ships and registries involved in fraudulent acts.

Fraudulent registration of ships – Outcome of LEG 110 (2023)

- LEG 110 noted the interim report on the Study to address issues arising in connection with fraudulent registration and fraudulent registries of ships and possible measures to prevent them by WMU, UNCTAD and IMLI:
 - What are the practices and types of fraudulent registration and fraudulent registries of ships?
 - What are the adverse impacts of fraudulent registration and fraudulent registries of ships?
 - What are the conventions, treaties and resolutions related to this issue?
 - Would this issue be considered as a crime or an offence? Is it national, regional or international in nature? What other international and effective legal sanctions for fraudulent registration, such as criminal punishment and administrative measures, could be imposed?

Fraudulent registration of ships – outcome of LEG 111 (2024)

- LEG 111 considered the final report on the Study Group on Fraudulent Registration and Fraudulent Registries of Ships
- Reestablished Correspondence Group on the Due Diligence and IMO Identification Number Schemes to:
 - continue to define and develop the elements of "due diligence" to be exercised in the process of registration of ships under the flag of a State; and
 - develop proposal for a new output on guidelines or best practices on registration of ships.

Outcome of LEG 112

- 10 years since the first reports on fraudulent registries
- Proposal for a new output to develop guidelines/best practices on the registration of ships
- Proposal to conduct Regulatory Scoping Exercise of IMO instruments to identify provisions which could be strengthened to target substandard shipping

Thank you.

International Maritime Organization

4 Albert Embankment
London
SE1 7SR
United Kingdom

Tel: +44 (0)20 7735 7611
Fax: +44 (0)20 7587 3210
Email: info@imo.org

IMO website: www.imo.org



[instagram.com/imo_hq/](https://www.instagram.com/imo_hq/)



x.com/IMOHQ



facebook.com/IMOHQ/



youtube.com/imohq



flickr.com/photos/imo-un



uk.linkedin.com/company/international-maritime-organization