



Office of
Deputy Commissioner
of Maritime Affairs

THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

LIBERIA MARITIME AUTHORITY

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08 November 2022

MARINE OPERATIONS NOTE 06/2022

(This Marine Operations Note supersedes Marine Operations Note 05/2018)

Subject: Voyage Data Recorder (VDR), S-VDR and Casualty Investigations

- Ref: (a) [Resolution MSC.333\(90\)](#) – Revised Performance Standards for Shipborne Voyage Data Recorders (VDRs), as amended by [Resolution MSC.494\(104\)](#)
- (b) [Resolution MSC.163\(78\)](#) – Performance Standards for Shipborne Simplified Voyage Data Recorders (S-VDRs), as amended by [Resolution MSC.214\(81\)](#) and further amended by [Resolution MSC.493\(104\)](#)
- (c) [MSC/Circ.1024](#) - Guidelines on Voyage Data Recorder (VDR) Ownership and Recovery
- (d) [RLM 109](#) – Report of Vessel Casualty or Accident

The following changes have been made:

- a. Revised performance standards in reference (a) and added reference (b)
- b. Added guidance on data storage in the VDR

Dear Shipowners/Operators and Masters,

This Administration reminds all Shipowners, Operators, and Masters that in the event of a marine casualty or accident, collection and analysis of the vessel's VDR / S-VDR data may provide evidence critical to a casualty investigation. The VDR/S-VDR equipment installed should be in accordance with references (a) and (b) above which provide the performance standards for shipborne VDRs and SVDRs. It is therefore required that the shipowner ensures that steps are taken to preserve and collect VDR / S-VDR data as soon as possible after a casualty and to provide this Administration with a copy of this data.

The attached MSC/Circ.1024 provides guidelines on the ownership and recovery of VDR / SVDR data. The shipowner is the owner of the VDR / S-VDR and its information at all times and in the event of a casualty it is the responsibility of the shipowner to ensure timely preservation and collection of VDR / S-VDR data. The procedures for preservation of the VDR data should be included in the vessel's SMS and Masters should be familiar with the operation of the specific VDR / S-VDR model installed on their vessel.

It may be necessary to engage a manufacturer's authorized technician to recover the VDR / S-VDR data for analysis. An attempt at recovery of the data by an unqualified individual may result in the loss or corruption of the data. Shipowners are advised to refer to the manufacturer's instructions for procedures specific to each model of VDR / S-VDR.

In cases where a vessel must be abandoned following a casualty and where time and other responsibilities permit, the vessel's Master shall retrieve the VDR / S-VDR module containing the data before abandoning the vessel. Master's should be familiar with the procedures for retrieving the VDR / S-VDR module containing the data on their own vessel and for the specific model of VDR / S-VDR on board. The vessel's SMS should include a procedure for retrieval of the VDR / S-VDR data module prior to abandonment of the vessel.

During the course of an investigation, the Flag State investigator shall have custody of the VDR / S-VDR data. Sufficient copies of the data should be made for provision to all investigating authorities. The shipowner may retain a copy of the VDR / S-VDR data for use in their own investigation of the incident. This Administration requires that a complete copy of the VDR / S-VDR data, including the audio recording, be saved to digital media, such as a DVD or flash drive, with any relevant instructions or required software to access the data, and be sent to us at the following address:

LISCR LLC
ATTN: Investigations Department
22980 Indian Creek Drive
Suite 200
Dulles, VA 20166
USA

When non-standard or proprietary formats are used for storing the data in the VDR, the software for converting the stored data into open industry standard formats should be provided on the portable storage device or resident in the VDR.

In addition, this Administration requires that every marine casualty be reported to: Investigations@liscr.com as soon as possible. An initial report may be in the form of a simple notification, so that an investigation may be commenced immediately. The official notification of a marine casualty must be made using the RLM-109 – Report of Vessel Casualty or Accident.

If you have any questions, please contact Investigations@liscr.com. To report a marine casualty after hours, please contact our Duty Officer at +1 703 963 6216, or email dutyofficer@liscr.com.

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