

4 ALBERT EMBANKMENT  
LONDON SE1 7SR  
Telephone: +44 (0)20 7735 7611 Fax: +44 (0)20 7587 3210

Circular Letter No.3958  
25 April 2019

To: All IMO Members  
United Nations and specialized agencies  
Intergovernmental organizations  
Non-governmental organizations in consultative status with IMO

Subject: **International Symposium on Extreme Maritime Weather:  
Towards Safety of Life at Sea and Sustainable Blue Economies  
(23 to 25 October 2019)**

1 The Secretary-General has the honour to invite participation at an International Symposium on Extreme Maritime Weather, jointly organized by IMO and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), which will be held at IMO Headquarters from 23 to 25 October 2019.

2 The Symposium, through a programme of presentations and discussion sessions featuring representatives of Member States of both IMO and WMO, international organizations, international shipping and meteorological communities and other stakeholders, aims at finding possible solutions to the risks created by extreme maritime weather events – those which are dangerous to any ship at sea and are a threat to life, property and the marine environment, notwithstanding the economic impacts to the global blue economy.

3 Provisional themes of the Symposium include, among others:

- .1 extreme maritime weather;
- .2 SOLAS Convention requirements;
- .3 end-user requirements;
- .4 ship observations for met-ocean information;
- .5 utilization of available and emerging technology for improved navigation; and
- .6 earth-ocean prediction capability and forecasts at sea.

Further details, including the provisional programme, will be promulgated in due course.

4 Member States are invited to disseminate the information in this circular letter to their shipping and meteorological communities, as well as other relevant stakeholders, to encourage their participation.

5 International organizations are also encouraged to disseminate the information in this Circular Letter among their associates and other interested parties and to register them under their delegations.\*

6 For more information, please contact:

World Meteorological Organization  
Marine Meteorology and Ocean Affairs Division  
Weather and Disaster Risk Reduction Services Department  
7bis, avenue de la Paix, P.O. Box 2300 – CH 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland  
Email: [mmo@wmo.int](mailto:mmo@wmo.int)

### **Participants' registration and procedures for visa applications**

7 With a view to facilitating participants' registration and visa applications by those attendees who require United Kingdom entry visas, information on registration at IMO meetings and the procedures governing the support by IMO of visa applications are set out in the annex.

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\* Refer to the annex and Circular Letter No.3463.

## ANNEX

### REGISTRATION FOR THE SYMPOSIUM

Member States, UN agencies, IGOs and NGOs are required to provide, prior to the meeting date, the names of all the members of their delegations attending the meeting via the Online Meeting Registration System (OMRS), as advised in Circular Letter No.3463 of 14 July 2014. This facilitates both their entry into the building and the production of the list of participants by the Secretariat.

Once they have completed the registration procedure, delegates will be issued at IMO with an electronic access card to pass through the security barrier in the IMO building. Issue of the access card will require photographic proof of identity, e.g. passport, identity card or driving license. Delegates may also be required to show proof of identity at any time while they are in the Headquarters building, if requested by IMO Security. In view of the significant costs incurred in producing access cards, delegates who have previously been issued with one are kindly requested to bring it with them for reactivation.

Any matters relating to the use of the OMRS should be communicated to:

Registration Unit  
Meeting Services and Interpretation Section,  
IMO  
Email: [onlineregistration@imo.org](mailto:onlineregistration@imo.org)

Members of delegations will not be registered to attend the meeting without authorization from their OMRS Delegation Coordinator. New delegates whose names appear in the OMRS will be issued with the above-mentioned access card. Delegates whose names are not on the OMRS list will be requested to contact their OMRS Delegation Coordinator in order to process their authorization to attend the meeting.

Delegates are advised that the Registration Desk will be open from 8.00 a.m. on **Wednesday, 23 October 2019**, when early arrival would be appreciated.

General information on administrative and housekeeping issues relating to meetings at IMO may be found in an information leaflet for delegates, which can be downloaded from IMODOCS and is also available at the Documents and Meeting Services counters on the ground floor and second floor, respectively. Delegates are kindly requested to familiarize themselves with the contents of the information leaflet.

## PROCEDURES GOVERNING THE SUPPORT BY IMO OF VISA APPLICATIONS

As established in article 7.2 of part III on Access and communications of the Headquarters agreement, delegates are entitled to have their entry into the United Kingdom authorized without delay and without charge.

Delegates invited by the Organization who require United Kingdom entry visas should, in the first instance, apply online for an "**EXEMPT**" visa, note the reference numbers and follow the online instructions to attend either the nominated Visa Application Centre or the United Kingdom Embassy or High Commission. United Kingdom visa applications should be accompanied by the following documentation:

- i. the relevant IMO official invitation,
- ii. the nomination letter and
- iii. a note verbale from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Delegates must be nominated by their competent Ministry (usually the Ministry of Transport or the National Maritime Administration). The nomination letter should be taken to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for preparation of a note verbale addressed to the British Embassy/High Commission.

If, after following the above-mentioned procedure, delegates still encounter visa problems, either the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Transport, the National Maritime Administration or the competent Ministry should request visa assistance in writing to the Head of the IMO External Relations Office, on paper bearing the official letterhead. The letter should state the reasons given by the British Embassy/High Commission as to why visas have been or may be refused and contain the following details:

- i. First name:  
Family name:  
Profession:  
Date of birth:  
Place of birth:  
Type of passport:  
Passport No:  
Place of issue:  
Date of issue:  
Valid until:  
Visa reference number:  
Date and place of visa application:
- ii. Purpose of visit:
- iii. Duration of anticipated stay in the United Kingdom:

This exercise must be undertaken **at least six weeks** before the date on which the session begins, to enable the Organization to support the visa application accordingly and the visa to be issued in good time.

Any requests for visa assistance should be communicated to:

External Relations Office (International Maritime Organization)  
Email: [visa@imo.org](mailto:visa@imo.org)