



G-B INTERNATIONAL

INTERNATIONAL SHIPS REGISTRY OF GUINEA-BISSAU

Marine Circular Nr. 04/ 2024, 30/09/2024

Subject: “Onboard Complaint Procedure under the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC), 2006 ”

Ref.: (a) MLC 2006 – Regulation 5.1.5

(b) G-B I.S.R. Code of Operation, Chapter 8.3 Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, as amended (MLC, 2006).

To: Shipowners/Operators, Legal Representatives of G-B I.S.R. flagged Vessels, Deputy Registrars Authorized Offices, Recognized Organizations (ROs) and Seafarers on board G-B flagged vessels.

Summary: This Mar. Cir. outlines the onboard complaint procedure available to seafarers serving on G-B I.S.R. flagged vessels. The procedure aims to ensure the timely and fair resolution of grievances relating to alleged breaches of rights as provided under the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC), 2006, or Guinea-Bissau's relevant Code of operation's provisions.

1. Objective

1.1 The objective of this Mar. Cir. is to establish a transparent system for addressing complaints, thereby promoting a safe and just working environment for seafarers, as per applicable ILO MLC Regulations and procedures. Moreover, this marine circular serves to address the key elements of an onboard complaint procedure to ensure that there is a fair, effective, and expeditious handling of seafarer complaints.

2. Scope of Application

2.1 This procedure applies to all individuals employed or engaged in any capacity on Guinea-Bissau International Ships Registry flagged vessels, where the I.L.O. Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) 2006 is applicable.

3. Key Definitions

- a. **Company:** Refers to the entity responsible for the operation of a ship under the ISM Code, or any other entity accountable for assigning seafarers to service aboard Guinea-Bissau vessels, as per the requirements of international conventions (SOLAS 1974, as amended, Chapter IX/1.2 which assumes the duties and responsibilities imposed by International Safety Management (ISM) Code).
- b. **External Authority:** Refers to authorities or organizations outside the shipowner's representatives onboard. This may include the Flag State, Port State Control officers, seafarers' unions, or any other welfare bodies that assist in resolving seafarer complaints.
- c. **Seafarers Employment Agreement (SEA):** Encompasses both the employment contract and the vessel's articles of agreement signed by the seafarer and the shipowner.

Page 1 of 3

G-B International Ship Registry

Email: gbi@gbissr.com

Tel: +30 2104529425

Address: Notara Str. 110-112,
Piraeus, 18535, Greece

Web: www.gbissr.com

BE INSPIRED.
GO FURTHER.
FLY GUINEA BISSAU.
A MODERN AND INNOVATIVE SHIP REGISTER

FORM CODE: 1131518-MAR-CIR Issue 01 Rev 01

G-B International – LB Offshore sal

Email: rmedawar@gbi-lb.org

Tel: +30 2104537950 / +961 -4- 710246

Address: 1st Floor, White Bldg, Zalka,
Metn, Lebanon

Web: www.gbi-lb.org



- d. Victimization: Includes any negative consequences or retaliation that a seafarer might face due to lodging a complaint in good faith.

4. Rights and Safeguards for Seafarers

4.1 A ship owner/operator shall provide a seafarer a copy of the onboard complaint procedures applicable to the ship together with a copy of their seafarers' employment agreement. The copy of the onboard complaint procedure includes:

- a. The right to be represented when filing a complaint.
- b. Assurance that no retaliation or victimization will occur as a result of filing a complaint.
- c. Contact details for the appropriate authorities, including the G-B I.S.R. Operations Department or, where applicable, the competent authority in the seafarer's home country.
- d. The names of individuals onboard who can provide confidential advice and assistance during the complaint process.

4.2 Any seafarer onboard a G-B I.S.R. flagged vessel shall have the right to lodge a complaint and to have that complaint investigated, provided it is specific and is alleged to constitute a breach of seafarers' rights under the MLC 2006 or the G-B I.S.R. Code of Operation. Seafarers are entitled to submit complaints directly to the Master, the shipowner, or any external competent authority, as they deem appropriate.

4.3 If a seafarer feels hesitant to report a complaint onboard due to fear of victimization, they have the right to contact the G-B I.S.R. Operations Department or submit their grievance directly to the appropriate national authority for guidance.

5. Complaint Handling Procedure

5.1 The first step in lodging a complaint involves reporting the issue to the head of the department or immediate supervisor onboard the vessel. Complaints should be sought to be resolved at the lowest level possible; and only when the matter cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of both parties, should it be elevated to the next level. Notwithstanding, in all cases, seafarers shall have the right to complain directly to the Master and, where they consider it necessary, to the Company DPA or his/her designee for conciliation.

5.2 If unresolved at a lower level, the matter should be escalated to the Master, who is responsible for addressing the complaint personally. If the Master cannot reconcile the complaint, the matter should be formally referred to the Company DPA or his/her designee who must conciliate the matter following the terms and conditions of employment

5.3 Should the complaint remain unresolved onboard, it must be referred to the shipowner for further review, with a reasonable timeframe for action agreed upon with the seafarer or their representative.

5.4 Should a complaint reach the level of external authorities, that authority shall be provided with the contact information of the Flag Administration and requested to communicate the complaint to the Flag Administration. The Flag Administration shall communicate the complaint to the Company DPA who shall then be expected to resolve the matter in accordance with the terms and conditions of employment to the satisfaction of both parties



G-B INTERNATIONAL

INTERNATIONAL SHIPS REGISTRY OF GUINEA-BISSAU

5.5 Complaints submitted to external authorities should be forwarded to the Guinea-Bissau International Ships Registry, which will liaise with the shipowner to seek an amicable resolution. Notwithstanding, in all cases, seafarers shall have the right to complain directly to the Master and, where they consider it necessary, to the Company DPA or his/her designee for conciliation

6. Documentation and Record-Keeping

6.1 All complaints must be documented in writing, with a report submitted to the shipowner outlining the actions taken and the resolutions agreed upon. A copy should be provided to the seafarer involved, and relevant entries made in the ship's logbook.

6.2 If external authorities handle the complaint, they must also submit a report to the shipowner and provide a copy to the seafarer.

7. Contact Information

7.1 For further assistance, the competent G-B I.S.R. Department can be reached at: G-B I.S.R – Operation Department (Email: ops@gbi-lb.org, Tel.: +30 210 4537950, +30 210 4537194).

8. Effective Date and Compliance

8.1 The provisions of the current Marine Circular have immediate effect as per the day of issuance.

9. Inquiries

9.1. Any inquiries relating to this Marine Circular may be addressed to the G-B I.S.R – Operation Department (Email: ops@gbi-lb.org, Tel.: +30 210 4537950, +30 210 4537194)

For the Guinea-Bissau International Ships Registry

Authorized Signatory:

Office of the General Ships Registrar



Attached

G-B I.S.R. MLC On-Board Complaint Procedure Format (p. 2)