



Marine Notice Nr. 03/2025, 05/08/2025

Subject: “Records Management Policy of the G-B I.S.R. for Flag State Functions”

To: Deputy Registrars, Recognized Organizations, Flag State Surveyors, Shipowners, Ship Operators, Ship Managers, and Ship Masters of the Guinea-Bissau International Ships Registry.

1. Purpose and Strategic Context

1.1 This Marine Notice establishes the general policy framework of the Guinea-Bissau International Ships Registry (G-B I.S.R.) regarding the management of official records generated in the performance of its delegated flag State functions. It is issued in alignment with paragraph 10 **of the IMO Instruments Implementation Code (III Code)**, which requires that Member States establish and maintain appropriate records as evidence of conformity to international obligations and of the effective operation of the State.

1.2 The Records Management Policy forms part of the G-B I.S.R.’s broader strategic commitment to transparency, integrity, continuity of operations, and auditability-principles essential for sustaining IMO compliance and long-term performance as an efficient and responsible flag State administration.

2. Key Policy Objectives on Records Management Policy

2.1 The Records Management Policy of the G-B I.S.R. aims to:

- a. Ensure structured, secure, and traceable documentation practices across all divisions and operational units;
- b. Safeguard the evidentiary trail of compliance with international maritime obligations;
- c. Support internal quality assurance, external audits (e.g., IMSAS, ISO), and institutional knowledge continuity;
- d. Enable efficient access and retrieval of information by authorized stakeholders, including the national competent Administration and other stakeholders.

3. Legal and Procedural Framework

3.1 This policy is derived from and governed by the following references:

- a. IMO Instruments Implementation Code (III Code), paragraph 10 – Records;
- b. MSC-MEPC.2/Circ.19 – Guidance on the III Code;
- c. Internal Standing Operating Procedure (SOP) 04/2025 titled:
“Control and Retention of G-B I.S.R. Flag State Records”;

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- d. Relevant internal notes (e.g., Internal Note 01-2024 and 02-2022) and departmental instructions.

4. Scope of Records Covered

4.1 Records covered by this policy are retained in secure digital or authenticated hardcopy form and classified per functional domain:

Functional Area	Examples of Records	Retention Period
Statutory Certification (TD, ROS)	Ship certificates (SOLAS, MARPOL, ISM, etc.)	5 years post-expiry or cancellation
Exemptions & Equivalents (TD)	Technical approvals, IMO GISIS submissions	5 years
STCW Certification (SCD-STCW)	Endorsements, recognitions, applications	7 years post-issuance
Inspections & Audits (TD, ROS)	Flag State inspection reports, ASIs, safety follow-ups	5–10 years (based on vessel risk)
Marine Casualties (CIC)	Investigation files, reports, GISIS entries	Minimum 10 years (indefinite if severe)
Technical Files (MOD & TD)	Ship plans, stability calculations	Life of ship + 5 years
Normative Documents (LIID, GSR) & Internal Management Documents	Marine Notices, SOPs, circulars, audit logs	Permanent (controlled archive)
Internal Governance (GSR, D-GSR OFC)	Delegation instruments, RO agreements, decisions	10 years
IMO Communication (LIID)	GISIS records, regulatory updates, audit notifications	5 years minimum / Permanent (for audit trail)

5. Key Management Procedures

5.1 The G-B I.S.R. enforces a system-wide, standardized procedure for managing records, covering the following elements:

- a. **Identification and classification** of documents by operational type and sensitivity;



- b. **Controlled storage**, both digital (via internal system and planned cloud platform) and hardcopy;
- c. **Retention schedules** assigned per record type and risk category;
- d. **Cybersecurity** protocols and physical protection measures;
- e. **Access control** and retrieval authorization logs;
- f. **Disposal or archiving procedures**, in line with data protection and institutional knowledge policies.

5.2 These procedures are formally embedded in the dedicated SOP and linked to each Division's mandate, including but not limited to:
Registration Division (RD), Technical Division (TD), Legal and IMO Instruments Implementation Division (LIID), Casualty Investigation Section (CIS), Seafarers Certification Division (SCD-STCW), and Maritime Operations Division (MOD).

6. Integration with Quality Assurance and Audit Compliance

6.1 The Records Management Policy is integrated into the internal quality management structure of the G-B I.S.R., supporting:

- a. Annual and special internal audits;
- b. Retrieval logs and inspection trail compliance for IMO IMSAS and other evaluations;
- c. Continuous Improvement efforts through post-audit recommendations and internal reviews.

6.2 Recordkeeping integrity is central to demonstrating both **operational reliability** and **regulatory compliance**, as expected by the IMO and Guinea-Bissau's competent Ministry.

7. Conclusion

7.1 This Marine Notice provides the policy-level foundation for a uniform, secure, and strategic Records Management regime at the G-B I.S.R. It ensures preparedness for internal and external audits, contributes to effective flag State oversight, and reinforces Guinea-Bissau's commitment to the IMO regulatory framework.

For the Guinea-Bissau International Ships Registry

Authorized Signatory:

Office of the General Ships Registrar

