

Circular to Members – Taiwan: New Security Review Requirements for Certain Vessels with PRC/Hong Kong/Macau Connections

With effect from 31 March 2025, vessels with connections to Mainland China, Hong Kong or Macau are subject to national security review when applying for direct voyage permits or business registration in Taiwan.

Scope of Application

- Vessels concerned include:
 1. *Substandard vessels* (currently understood to mean ships registered under “black flag” registries such as Cameroon, Tanzania, Mongolia, Togo, Sierra Leone), and
 2. *Specific vessel types*: drive-on/drive-off vessels, semi-submersibles, platform vessels, heavy-lift carriers, crane ships, oil tankers, product tankers, LPG carriers, etc.
- “Mainland China, Hong Kong or Macau background” applies not only to vessels flying the PRC/Hong Kong flag, but also to foreign-flagged ships whose **owners or carriers are registered** in these jurisdictions.
- The review will also apply to vessels built in, or with capital/ownership links to, these regions, as assessed by the authorities.

Review Process

- Applications involving such vessels are referred to Taiwan’s National Security Bureau, Ministry of National Defense, Mainland Affairs Council, and Coast Guard for joint review.
- The procedure is **non-transparent**, no enquiries can be made during the review, and no clear indication has been given of the time required for completion.
- **Each application is considered individually**; once approval is granted, the direct voyage permit will only be valid for a fixed period, after which a new application must be submitted.
- The application review may be conducted in accordance with the MPB’s “Application and Review Procedures for Mainland Chinese Working Vessels Entering Taiwan,” with

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the assistance of a local agent in filing the application.

Practical Guidance

- The Maritime and Port Bureau has advised that applications should be lodged **at least 30 days in advance** to reduce the risk of delay to vessel operations.
- Operators should prepare the relevant ownership and carrier details in advance, as the MTNet system will require this information in new dedicated fields.

Summary

This development is understood to be administrative rather than legislative, but in practice it imposes significant additional lead time for vessels with PRC/Hong Kong/Macau links calling at Taiwan under direct voyage permits. Members are therefore strongly encouraged to allow ample time for applications and to anticipate possible delays.

We will continue to monitor developments and update Members if further clarification or formal guidance is issued by the Taiwanese authorities.

Shall Club and members have further inquiries of the new national security review, please feel free to contact our office, Taiwan Maritime Services Ltd. as the correspondent of Club in Taiwan. Urgent 24/7 contact hotline is +886 983 345693.

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