E-205222
28/10

VISAKHAPATNAM PORT AUTHORITY
TRAFFIC DEPARTMENT

ITRA/SHP/FCIR/868
DT: 28.10.2026

CIRCULAR NO: 2004 /2026

Sub: Compliance with the Merchant Shipping (Regulation of Entry of Ships into Coastal Waters) Rules, 2026 – Revised requirements for ships entering or operating in Indian coastal waters – Reg.

Ref: DGMA Circular No. 69 of 2026 dated 14.10.2026 (File No.25-104/57/2025-NT-DGS, Comp. No. 37653) of the Directorate General of Maritime Administration, Mumbai.

******

All Port Users, Ship Operators, Shipping Agents and other stakeholders are hereby informed that the Government of India has notified the Merchant Shipping (Regulation of Entry of Ships into Coastal Waters) Rules, 2026, vide G.S.R. 815(E) dated 16 September 2026, under the Merchant Shipping Act, 2025. These Rules supersede the Merchant Shipping (Regulation of Entry of Ships into Ports, Anchorages and Offshore Facilities) Rules, 2012.

In this regard, attention is invited to DGMA Circular No. 69 of 2026 dated 14 October 2026, issued by the Directorate General of Maritime Administration, Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Government of India, regarding the transition period for compliance with the revised requirements.

The 2026 Rules apply to all Indian ships and to every ship other than an Indian ship that operates in or navigates through Indian coastal waters, whether or not it enters an Indian port, anchorage or offshore facility.

Ships other than Indian ships whose age exceeds the threshold prescribed under Rule 5 of the 2026 Rules shall hold a valid certificate of class issued by a classification society that is a member of the International Association of Classification Societies (IACS) or by a Recognized Organization, as applicable.

As prescribed under Rule 6 of the 2026 Rules, every ship other than an Indian ship that enters, remains in or sails out of an Indian port, seeks port facilities, or transits or operates within Indian coastal waters is required to maintain valid Salvage and Marine Pollution Response Contracts with entities approved under the Act.

As communicated by DGMA, a transitional period of six months has been provided to ships already operating in, or otherwise permitted entry into, Indian coastal waters to comply with the additional requirements introduced under the 2026 Rules.

Contd: Pg:2

Galaxy S24 Ultra

Accordingly, such ships have been allowed time up to 1 April 2027 to comply with the revised classification requirements and to maintain the requisite Salvage and Marine Pollution Response Contracts.

All ship owners, ship managers, ship operators and shipping agents are advised to Review the existing statutory and compliance arrangements applicable to their vessels in light of the 2026 Rules and to ensure that all applicable requirements are fulfilled within the stipulated transitional period, latest by 1 April 2027.

This circular is issued for the information and necessary action of all Port Users.

22/01/26

TRAFFIC MANAGER

C/- P.S to Chairperson for favor of information of Chairperson.

C/- P.S to Dy. Chairperson for favor of information of Dy. Chairperson.

C/-Jt. Director (R&P) for necessary action to post the circular in Port Website.

C/- President, Visakhapatnam Steam Ship Agents Association for information please.

C/- President, Visakhapatnam Stevedores Association, for information please.

C/- President, Visakhapatnam Customs Brokers Association for information please.

C/- Shipping Asst. (Traffic Department), to circulate the above to Trade through e-mail.

Galaxy S24 Ultra