



REPUBLIC OF VANUATU
OFFICE OF THE
MARITIME ADMINISTRATOR

VANUATU INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING REGISTRY

Circular #019

Compliance with Vanuatu Government Policy on Territorial Waters of the Republic of Georgia

Date: May 1, 2025

From: Saade Makhoulf
President and CEO

To: All Masters and Owners of Vanuatu Flagged Vessels

Dear Esteemed Colleagues,

As the President and CEO of the Vanuatu Maritime Administrator, Vanuatu Logistics and Administrative Services Limited (VLAS), I am writing to inform you of an important update regarding our compliance obligations in relation to international maritime law and territorial sovereignty.

The Government of Vanuatu recognizes the sovereignty of the Republic of Georgia over its territorial waters, including that of the Abkhazia region. In line with this recognition, it is imperative that all Vanuatu flagged vessels operate in adherence to this policy.

We would like to remind all vessel owners and operators that, while the principle of innocent passage under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) is upheld, it does not exempt vessels from complying with the specific policies set forth by the Vanuatu government regarding Georgia's territorial integrity.

Effective immediately, all Vanuatu flagged vessels are required to avoid navigating within the territorial waters of Georgia without the necessary permission from Georgia's authorities, particularly in areas designated as occupied waters. The Administration will undertake necessary actions against any vessels found in violation of this directive, which may include sanctions or revocation of flags.

We appreciate your cooperation and diligence in ensuring compliance with this policy. Should you have any questions or require further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

Sincerely,



Saade Makhoulf
President and CEO
Vanuatu Logistics and Administrative Services Limited (VLAS)
Administrator of the Vanuatu International Shipping Registry (VISR)