

CIRCULAR	Circular No. 015 (Amended)
SUBJECT	Fishing Vessels - Incident Reporting, Evidence Preservation and Strict Compliance
FROM	Office of the Maritime Administrator, Vanuatu International Shipping Registry
TO	All owners, operators, managers, masters and Special Agents of Vanuatu-flagged fishing and fishing-support vessels
AMENDMENT DATE	20 August 2026
EFFECTIVE DATE	Upon publication
STATUS	Version 2.0 - Supersedes the prior version of Circular No. 015

Authority and legal status. This Circular is issued by the Maritime Administrator under the functions and powers conferred by the Maritime Act [CAP 131], as amended by the Maritime (Amendment) Act No. 21 of 2025, including section 10C where applicable, and any additional written authority lawfully applicable to the subject. It shall be read with applicable mandatory IMO instruments and controlled VISR policies. It does not convert a direct statutory power into a delegated power, transfer a function assigned by law to another State entity, or amend any valid appointment, concession or other governing instrument.

Related controlled policies: VISR-QMS-POL-CAS-010 - Marine Casualty and Marine Incident Safety Investigation Policy; VISR-QMS-POL-CI-002 - IMSAS Compliance, Internal Audit, Corrective Action and Continual Improvement Policy; VISR-QMS-POL-REC-005 - Document and Records Control, Retention and IMSAS Evidence Management Policy.

1. Fishing-specific reporting duty

This Circular supplements Circular No. 029 by establishing additional reporting obligations for fishing and fishing-support vessels. Owners, operators and masters must report safety, fisheries, labour, environmental and operational events without delay.

2. Reportable events

- Death, serious injury, missing person, abandonment, fire, flooding, collision, grounding, loss of stability, structural failure, pollution or loss of propulsion or steering.
- VMS, AIS, LRIT or electronic reporting failure; unauthorized shutdown; unexplained position gap; identity or call-sign discrepancy.
- Fisheries boarding, detention, arrest, investigation, infringement notice, RFMO inquiry or proposed IUU listing.
- Unauthorized fishing or transshipment, observer obstruction, disappearance or injury, catch-record irregularity, protected-species event or serious labour complaint.
- Loss, alteration or suspected forgery of Registry, safety, fisheries, crew, catch or insurance documentation.

3. Immediate actions

- Protect life, stabilize the vessel and comply with lawful directions of competent authorities.
- Notify VISR and the competent Vanuatu fisheries authority immediately and provide a factual initial report.
- Preserve VDR or other voyage data, VMS and AIS data, electronic logs, catch records, observer records, photographs, communications and physical evidence.
- Do not resume the affected operation, transshipment or voyage where VISR or another competent authority has directed suspension.

4. Follow-up and closure

Provide a complete factual report, root-cause analysis and corrective action within the period directed. VISR may require FSI or RO attendance, independent investigation, crew interviews, company review or inspection of sister vessels. The event remains open until formal written closure.

Compliance records and communications

All applications, approvals, notices, reports, evidence, decisions, acknowledgements and corrective-action records required by this Circular must be transmitted through an official VISR channel and retained in the controlled Registry file in accordance with the VISR records policy. Communications from unverified domains or persons without written authority must not be relied upon.

Official contact: admin@register-vu.com. Urgent safety, casualty, sanctions or fraud matters must also be copied to info@register-vu.com and reported without delay.

Enforcement, reasons and reconsideration

Non-compliance may result in enhanced inspection, corrective-action requirements, service restrictions, suspension, administrative penalties, withdrawal or revocation of documents, or deletion from the Registry, to the extent authorized by law and the applicable written authority. Except where immediate protective action is necessary for safety, security, sanctions compliance, documentary integrity or preservation of evidence, an affected person will be notified of the material grounds and given a reasonable opportunity to respond. A request for reconsideration must be submitted in writing to the Office of the Maritime Administrator with supporting evidence within ten business days of the written decision, unless a shorter period is stated because of an urgent risk.

Supersession and effective application

This amended Circular supersedes the prior version of Circular No. 015 from the effective date stated above. Existing obligations, liabilities, investigations, fees and corrective actions arising under the prior version remain enforceable to the extent lawfully incurred and are to be administered under the clearer procedures stated in this amended version. If this Circular conflicts with a later Act, regulation or controlled VISR policy, the higher or later instrument prevails and the Circular shall be updated through document control.



Saade Makhoul
Maritime Administrator of the Republic of Vanuatu
Vanuatu International Shipping Registry

Issued in Port Vila and New York
20 August 2026