

CIRCULAR	Circular No. 019 (Amended)
SUBJECT	Compliance with Vanuatu Government Policy Concerning the Territorial Waters of Georgia
FROM	Office of the Maritime Administrator, Vanuatu International Shipping Registry
TO	All shipowners, managers, operators, masters, charterers, Special Agents and Recognized Organizations
AMENDMENT DATE	20 August 2026
EFFECTIVE DATE	Upon publication
STATUS	Version 2.0 - Supersedes the prior version of Circular No. 019

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-REG-003 - Regulatory Monitoring, Legislative Change and Administrative Decisions Policy; VISR-QMS-POL-REC-005 - Document and Records Control, Retention and IMSAS Evidence Management Policy.

1. Government policy

The Government of Vanuatu recognizes the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Georgia, including its territorial waters associated with the Abkhazia region. Vanuatu-flagged vessels must conduct their navigation and port activities consistently with that policy and applicable international law.

2. Mandatory requirements

- Do not call at a port, terminal or offshore facility in the Abkhazia region or enter the relevant territorial waters for commercial purposes without prior written approval from VISR following Government consultation.
- Before fixing a voyage with a Georgian territorial-water or Abkhazia nexus, submit the proposed route, port, charterer, cargo, counterparties and legal basis for review.
- Maintain accurate AIS, logbook, chart, voyage-plan, port-clearance, cargo and communication records.
- Do not use false routing, inaccurate destination entries, identity manipulation or documentary descriptions intended to conceal the location or nature of the call.

3. Emergency exception

The master may act without prior approval where strictly necessary to save life, respond to distress, obtain urgent medical assistance or avoid imminent danger. VISR must be notified immediately, the action must be limited to the necessity and all evidence must be preserved.

4. Continuing legal review

Owners, managers and charterers remain responsible for current legal advice and compliance with port, sanctions, customs, insurance and charter-party requirements. VISR approval does not remove obligations imposed by other competent authorities.

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: compliance@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. 019 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