

CIRCULAR	Circular No. 026 (Amended)
SUBJECT	Electronic Registry Certificates and Mandatory QR-Code Validation
FROM	Office of the Maritime Administrator, Vanuatu International Shipping Registry
TO	All shipowners, managers, operators, masters, Special Agents, Recognized Organizations, Flag State Inspectors, Port State Control authorities, insurers and stakeholders
AMENDMENT DATE	20 August 2026
EFFECTIVE DATE	Upon publication
STATUS	Version 2.0 - Supersedes the prior version of Circular No. 026

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; VISR-QMS-POL-CI-002 - IMSAS Compliance, Internal Audit, Corrective Action and Continual Improvement Policy.

1. Status of electronic certificates

VISR electronic Registry and statutory certificates issued through an approved Registry system, bearing an authorized electronic signature, unique document identifier and QR code or equivalent verification feature, are official documents of the Republic of Vanuatu and have the same administrative effect as an authorized paper document, subject to the applicable convention and law.

2. Mandatory verification protocol

- Verify every electronic certificate through the official VISR website or verification portal reached from www.register-vu.com; do not rely on a link embedded in an unsolicited message.
- Confirm vessel name, IMO or official number, document type, issue date, expiry date, issuing authority, status and any endorsements or limitations.
- Where online access is temporarily unavailable, compare the unique identifier and document data, retain an offline copy onboard and request confirmation from technical@register-vu.com.
- A screenshot, copied QR image or third-party database entry is not a substitute for verification against the official source.
- Any mismatch, failed validation, suspicious domain, altered field or duplicate identifier must be reported immediately and the document must not be relied upon until VISR confirms its status.

3. Onboard and company controls

- The company must keep current electronic certificates accessible onboard and ashore in a manner that can be displayed and printed upon request.
- Masters, DPAs and document-control personnel must be trained to retrieve, verify and present the certificates without avoidable delay.
- Superseded, revoked, cancelled or replaced certificates must be segregated and clearly marked to prevent unintended use.
- Electronic files must not be edited, converted in a manner that removes security features, or placed on look-alike websites or unauthorized validation systems.

4. Exceptional paper issue

VISR may issue or accept a paper instrument only where required by a mandatory instrument, a competent authority, a technical contingency or a written Registry decision. A paper exception does not authorize alteration or duplication and remains subject to Registry verification.

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: technical@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. 026 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.



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