

Marshall Islands Issues First LRIT Certificates

8 August 2008

The Marshall Islands flagged vessels M/T Port Louis, M/T Altius and M/V Port Melbourne, managed by International Tanker Management (ITM), have become the first vessels in the world to be officially issued with Long Range Identification and Tracking (LRIT) Conformance Test Report Certification.

The certification was granted following the successful shipborne equipment conformance testing of the vessels' Inmarsat-C equipment.

The tests were conducted by Pole Star Applications, under an agreement between the company and the Republic of the Marshall Islands Maritime Administration.

Pole Star first commenced operational trials of a MarVTS National Data Centre (NDC) solution for the administration during 2006, was appointed as its NDC/Authorised Service Provider (ASP) for LRIT in 2007.

Through the IMO LRIT Working Group meetings in 2008, the Marshall Islands Maritime Administration initiated the drafting of the LRIT Conformance Test specifications resulting in MSC.1/Circ.1257, which provides 'Guidance on the Survey and Certification of Compliance of Ships with the Requirement to Transmit LRIT Information'.

Capt. Thomas F. Heinan, Marshall Islands Deputy Commissioner of Maritime Affairs, stated: "We are extremely pleased to be the first flag administration to commence the issuance of LRIT Conformance Test Report Certification."

"As a reflection of the quality of our owners and operators, we are already tracking the Marshall Islands flagged vessels that must be compliant with LRIT."

"With Pole Star, our recognised ASP, we are now well positioned to respond to the demands of our shipowners, operators and managers and to support their drive for LRIT compliance."

Lars Modin, managing director of ITM, added: "We are extremely pleased to be the first operator to be tested and certified under this new legislation. We are now well placed to respond to the demands of our clients and their requirements for LRIT compliance."

"Being able to test our equipment early meant we were able to resolve any issues with terminals early. With 100,000 terminals to be tested between now and December, we knew we couldn't afford to wait."

IMO LRIT regulations, which came into force on January 1st this year, require designated vessels to carry a terminal capable of transmitting an Automatic Position Report (APR).

The closing date for the first category of vessels is the first radio survey of that ship carried out after 31 December 2008.