

Instructions to the Continuous Synopsis Record (CSR)¹

1. Introduction

From 1 July 2004, SOLAS Chapter XI-1, regulation 5 requires all passenger ships and cargo ships of 500 gross tonnage and above engaged on international voyages to have on board a Continuous Synopsis Record (CSR).

A ship's CSR file comprises of:

1. all CSR documents (Form 1) issued by the ship's Administration(s), numbered sequentially over the life of the ship;
2. all amendment forms (Form 2) attached to each individual CSR document relating to changes made to that CSR document; and
3. all indices of amendments (Form 3) listing all amendments (specified by amendment forms) relating to each CSR document and attached to Form 1 above.

This CSR (file) builds up, over time, the history of the ship and constitutes the Continuous Synopsis Record, all of which **MUST** be available, on request, to authorised port state inspectors.

2. The CSR Document

Only the ship's Administration can issue a ship's CSR document (Form 1) to a ship. The first CSR document issued to a ship is numbered 1 (one) and subsequent CSR documents are to be sequentially numbered. The sequential numbering continues across change of flag throughout the life of the ship.

Each original CSR document will have to be sent to the ship and kept by the ship throughout its lifetime. The Administration needs to keep a copy (which may be an electronic copy) of each CSR document issued to the ship. It is suggested that the company responsible for the safety and security of the ship also keep a copy.

Whenever issuing a CSR document to a ship, the Administration will have to provide all information in rows 1 to 16 of Form 1 (indicate "N/A" if not applicable). Information number 8 on the CSR only has to be completed if the ship is actually bareboat chartered.

3. Amendments and indices completed by the Company or the master

Whenever any change relating to the entries listed in the current CSR document of the ship has taken place, this change needs to be included **without delay** in the ship's CSR file. Pending the issue of a revised and updated CSR document by the ship's Administration, the Company or master is required to complete an amendment form (Form 2) and attach the original to the

¹ C.f. Annex to IMO Resolution A.959(23) and suggestions provided by the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS).

current CSR document. A copy of the completed amendment form has to be forwarded without delay to the ship's Administration for their consideration and action.

Additionally, whenever an amendment form is attached to the ship's current CSR document, details of the amendment have also to be entered in the index of amendments (Form 3) and attached to the current CSR document in date order.

4. Issue of revised and updated CSR documents by the Administration

Following the receipt of copies of one or more amendment forms, the Administration is required to issue a revised and updated CSR document as soon as practically possible but not later than three months from the date of the change. Amendment forms should *not* be completed by Administrations.

In case of a change of flag, the previous flag State has to issue a new CSR document to the ship showing the date the ship ceased to be registered with that flag. That flag State is required to send a copy of the ship's CSR file, without delay, to the new flag State.

As soon as possible, but not later than three months after a change of flag, the new Flag State is required to issue to the ship a sequentially numbered CSR document.

5. Actions by masters when receiving a *revised and updated* CSR document

On receipt of a revised and updated CSR document, the master should check its sequential number and review the document to ensure that it covers all relevant amendment forms attached to the previous CSR document.

In case this review establishes that there are outstanding amendments not reflected in the latest CSR document, the master should do the following:

1. complete new amendment form(s) relating to each outstanding amendment and attach it to the latest CSR document;
2. list the amendment(s) referred to in .1 above in the index of amendments (Form 3) attached to the latest CSR document; and
3. forward copies of the amendment form(s) to the ship's Administration.

The ship is required to maintain the CSR by keeping every CSR document, sequentially numbered, issued by the ship's flag state **TOGETHER WITH** any amendment documents issued by the company or master.

The record of changes to every flag state issued CSR document **MUST** also be completed. It is suggested that a clearly identifiable CSR loose leaf binder is provided to the ship for this purpose, to be kept, and updated, by the master or Ship Security Officer as the company may decide.

It is also recommended that the ship's security plan should contain the current CSR information.

6. In case of loss of, or damage to, any document in a ship's CSR file

In case of loss of, or damage to, a ship's CSR file, the Company or master should contact in writing the ship's Administration without delay, and list the papers lost or damaged. The Administration should subsequently provide relevant duplicates to the ship of the CSR documents and amendment forms that it holds, to replace such papers. Such duplicates should be marked accordingly.

7. Possibility of Inconsistencies

The primary purpose of the CSR is to provide a history of the ship, which can be inspected by appropriate officials. Given the flexibility and timescales provided in regulation 5 it is possible that the information contained in a ship's current CSR document will lag behind that contained in the certificates issued in respect of the ship. As the Administration is required to issue a new CSR document within 3 months of the date of the change, the resulting time lag could be of that order. If inconsistencies are identified the reasons for them should be considered before action is taken based solely on the view that an inconsistency exists.

8. Recommended action by owners according to ICS

1. Allocate shore-side responsibility for the maintenance of the ship's CSR
2. Decide/Issue instructions in respect of who can issue amendments (master/company) to the CSR document and who has the responsibility of notifying the flag state of changes to it
3. Decide/Issue instructions to the ship in respect of holding the CSR file and the completion of the index of amendments.