

THE IMO BOOKSHELF – BACKUP ARRANGEMENTS OF DIGITAL PRODUCTS CARRIED ON BOARD SHIP

Accepted publications in electronic format

The Maritime Safety Committee, at its 81st session (10 to 19 May 2006), and the Marine Environment Protection Committee, at its 53rd session (18 to 22 July 2005), gave guidance on the carriage of publications on board ships, and approved the IMO requirements on carriage of publications on board ships as follows:

Publications may be carried on board ship in the form of electronic media such as a CD in lieu of hard copies. Acceptable publications in electronic form should be those issued by IMO or an Administration or a body authorized by an Administration to ensure correctness of their contents and to safeguard against illegal copying. A medium could either contain a publication or as many publications as possible. In any case, the media should be treated in accordance with the document control procedures in the ship's Safety Management System (SMS) including procedures for timely update.

Ref: [MSC-MEPC.2/Circ.2](#)

Requirements for digital products carried on board ship

Many flag States have now issued guidance on the carriage of digital products. Such guidance will make reference to the main computer and the backup arrangements provided on board.

Guidance for the main computer will typically state that the digital publications should be installed on a computer that is always connected to both the main and an emergency source of power.

With regard to the backup arrangements, a statement will be given that adequate back up must be provided. How this is implemented depends on the requirements of the flag State, but is generally one of the following:

- already installed on at least one other backup computer on board
- can be installed on another computer on board or reinstalled on the same computer, within a short period of time/available on a CD, portable storage device, or second unlock code.

Situations where a backup license is no longer available on board

Where a ship no longer has an available back up license on board (because the backup license has been used or the respective computer crashed or was replaced), they must make provision to obtain a replacement back up license to comply with flag State guidance as outlined above.

With respect to The IMO Bookshelf, a new license must be purchased for each title.