

Vessel Services

CIRCULAR 002-20 | January 19, 2021

Update on PCSOPEP Penalties for Noncompliance

Effective **January 18, 2021**, vessels determined to be non-compliant with Panama Canal Shipboard Oil Pollution Emergency Plan (PCSOPEP) requirements will **only** be scheduled for transit after they fulfill both of the following requirements:

- (1) The owner, operator, or the vessel's shipping agent has paid or has placed a satisfactory guarantee for the payment of the applicable sanction, by sending the letter of acceptance and undertaking of payment; and,
- (2) The vessel submits a PCSOPEP that complies with the requirements established in Notice to Shipping No.12-2021 at least 96 hours prior to arrival at Canal waters.

Note: The sanction will be set at a minimum of \$2,500.00

As a reminder all vessels with fuel and/or oil cargo-carrying capacity of 400 metric tons (MT) or more must have a compliant PCSOPEP submitted at least 96 hours prior to arrival in Canal waters.

***** Failure to have a compliant plan in place may result in both a monetary penalty and a delayed transit until the 96-hour timeframe is met, even if this is the first violation for the vessel. *****

Please see [**Advisory to Shipping No. A-03-2021**](#) from the Panama Canal Authority for more information on these penalties. More information on the Panama Canal requirements in general is available in the [Notice to Shipping No. N-1-2021.](#)

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact us at inquiry@wittobriens.com.

Required Actions

- Notify your client specialist as soon as possible, and at least 96 hours in advance of the vessel's ETA in Panama Canal waters, if your vessel will transit the Panama Canal and does **not** currently have a PCSOPEP in place or your current Notice of Acknowledgement (NOA) is expired. This will ensure we are able to meet the 96-hour submission timeframe and avoid the above penalties.