GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN
MINISTRY OF MARITIME AFFAIRS
(PORTS & SHIPPING WING)
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No.3 (3)/2021-CNS Karachi, the 19th November, 2026.

MERCHANT SHIPPING NOTICE
Circular No. 009/2026

Notice to All Pakistani Flag Shipowners, Ship Managers and Operators, Recognized Organizations authorized by the Government of Pakistan, Pakistan National Shipping Corporation and other concerned shipping companies, Karachi Port Trust, Port Qasim Authority, Gwadar Port Authority and other relevant port / terminal operators,Surveyors,Shipping Agents, Cargo Interests, Grain Shippers and Cargo Surveyors Maritime Training Institutes in Public and Private sector and other all concerned.

Subject: IMPLEMENTATION AND COMPLIANCE WITH AMENDMENT 08-25 TO THE INTERNATIONAL MARITIME SOLID BULK CARGOES (IMSBC) CODE – RESOLUTION MSC.575(110)

1. Introduction

1.1. The Directorate General Ports & Shipping (DG-P&S), Ministry of Maritime Affairs, Government of Pakistan, hereby draws the attention of all Pakistani shipowners, ship operators, Masters, Recognized Organizations, port authorities, terminal operators, shippers and other concerned stakeholders to the adoption of Amendment 08-25 to the International Maritime Solid Bulk Cargoes (IMSBC) Code by the International Maritime Organization (IMO), through Resolution MSC.575(110), adopted on 27 June 2025.

1.2. The IMSBC Code establishes internationally recognized safety requirements for the carriage of solid bulk cargoes by sea, including requirements relating to cargo classification, cargo characteristics, hazards, cargo information, loading, stowage, carriage, unloading and precautions necessary to protect ships, personnel and the marine environment.

1.3. The IMSBC Code was adopted by IMO Resolution MSC.268(85) and became mandatory under SOLAS Chapter VI with effect from 1 January 2011. Amendment 08-25 introduces technical revisions to existing cargo schedules and additional individual schedules for newly included solid bulk cargoes.

2. Effective Date and Implementation Arrangements

2.1. In accordance with Resolution MSC.575(110), Amendment 08-25 is available for voluntary application from 1 January 2026 and shall enter into force internationally on 1 January 2027.

2.2. During the transitional period from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2026, cargoes may be carried in accordance with either:

a) The IMSBC Code incorporating Amendment 07-23; or
b) The IMSBC Code incorporating Amendment 08-25.

2.3. From 1 January 2027, all solid bulk cargoes falling within the scope of the IMSBC Code shall be carried in accordance with the Code incorporating Amendment 08-25.

2.4. Pakistani shipowners and operators are strongly advised to adopt Amendment 08-25 in advance, wherever practicable, to ensure that their vessels, cargo documentation, safety management procedures and operational arrangements are fully prepared before its mandatory implementation.

3. Principal Amendments Introduced under Amendment 08-25

3.1. Amendment 08-25 introduces revisions to 11 existing individual cargo schedules and adds 11 new individual cargo schedules, together with consequential amendments to the relevant appendices of the IMSBC Code.

3.2. The amendments include revisions concerning:

a) Aluminium ferrosilicon powder and aluminium silicon powder.
b) Aluminium smelting by-products and aluminium remelting by-products.
c) Castor beans, including clarification of the permitted Bulk Cargo Shipping Name (BCSN).
d) Direct Reduced Iron (A) and Direct Reduced Iron (B), including additional requirements concerning apparent density.
e) Ferrosilicon cargoes and associated precautions against cargo-related hazards.
f) Ferrous metal borings, shavings, turnings and cuttings liable to self-heating.
g) Fish meal and fish scrap, stabilize.
h) Iron ore pellets.

3.3. The following new individual cargo schedules have been introduced:

New cargo schedule	**IMSBC Group**
Aluminium Sulphate Granular	B
Apatite Concentrate	A
Asphalt Granulates	C
Crushed Granodiorite, Coarse	C
Ferric Sulphate Granular	B
Fish Meal, Stabilized	C
Iron Ore Briquettes	C
Pea Protein Concentrate Pellets	C
Phosphate Rock Fines (uncalcined)	A
Tuff, Coarse	C
Zinc Slag (coarse)	C

3.4. Shipowners, Masters and cargo interests shall consult the revised individual cargo schedules in the official 2025 edition of the IMSBC Code before accepting, loading or transporting any affected cargo.

3.5. Particular attention shall be given to Group A cargoes, which may liquefy if shipped at a moisture content exceeding their Transportable Moisture Limit (TML), and cargoes presenting risks of self-heating, oxidation, toxic gas release, corrosion or other hazards.

4. Responsibilities of Shipowners and Ship Operators

4.1. All shipowners and operators of vessels engaged in the carriage of solid bulk cargoes shall review their existing operational procedures and Safety Management Systems (SMS) to incorporate the relevant requirements of Amendment 08-25.

4.2. Shipowners shall ensure that:

a) The latest applicable IMSBC Code is available onboard.
b) Masters and relevant shipboard personnel are familiar with the revised cargo schedules and associated hazards.
c) Cargo acceptance procedures are updated to reflect the amended BCSN (Bulk Cargo Shipping Name) and cargo characteristics.
d) Appropriate risk assessments are conducted before loading and carriage.
e) Adequate arrangements exist for cargo monitoring, ventilation, temperature measurement, gas detection and emergency response, as applicable to the cargo.
f) Cargo handling and emergency procedures are reviewed and updated.

4.3. The Company's Designated Person Ashore (DPA) shall ensure that the implementation of the amended requirements is incorporated into the Company's SMS in accordance with the ISM Code.

5. Responsibilities of Masters

5.1. The Master shall ensure that no solid bulk cargo is accepted for loading without receiving the appropriate cargo information and documentation required under SOLAS Chapter VI and the IMSBC Code.

5.2. Before commencement of loading, the Master shall verify:

a) Correct identification of the cargo by its Bulk Cargo Shipping Name (BCSN).
b) Applicable IMSBC cargo schedule and cargo group.
c) Cargo hazards and associated precautions.
d) Moisture content and Transportable Moisture Limit (TML), where applicable.
e) Required cargo certificates, declarations and test reports.
f) Compatibility of the proposed cargo with the ship's construction, cargo spaces and operational capabilities.

5.3. The Master shall ensure that the loading plan, stability calculations, longitudinal strength calculations and cargo distribution arrangements are appropriate for the proposed cargo and comply with the applicable ship-specific loading limitations.

5.4. Where cargo information is incomplete, inconsistent or does not comply with the applicable IMSBC requirements, the Master shall seek clarification and shall not permit loading until the relevant safety requirements have been satisfactorily addressed.

6. Responsibilities of Shippers and Cargo Interests

6.1. Shippers and consignors shall provide the Master or the Master's representative with complete and accurate cargo information sufficiently in advance of loading, as required under SOLAS Chapter VI, Regulation 2 and the IMSBC Code.

6.2. Such information shall include, as applicable:

a) Correct Bulk Cargo Shipping Name (BCSN).
b) Cargo group classification (A, B or C).
c) Cargo characteristics and associated hazards.
d) Moisture content and TML certificates for Group A cargoes.
e) Applicable sampling and testing documentation.
f) Precautions relating to self-heating, oxidation, gas emission, toxicity, corrosivity and other cargo-specific risks.
g) Any special handling, loading, ventilation and monitoring requirements.

6.3. Shippers shall ensure that cargo samples are collected, tested and certified in accordance with the applicable provisions of the IMSBC Code and relevant IMO guidance.

6.4. Cargoes shall not be misdeclared, incorrectly identified or presented under an inappropriate cargo schedule to avoid applicable safety requirements.

7. Responsibilities of Recognized Organizations

7.1. All Recognized Organizations acting on behalf of the Administration shall bring Amendment 08-25 to the attention of their surveyors, technical departments and relevant shipowners.

7.2. ROs shall, within their delegated statutory responsibilities:

a) Review relevant shipboard cargo procedures and SMS arrangements during applicable surveys and audits.
b) Verify that vessels have access to the applicable IMSBC Code edition.
c) Examine the adequacy of shipboard procedures for cargo acceptance, loading, stowage, monitoring and emergency response.
d) Advise shipowners regarding relevant technical changes affecting the safe carriage of solid bulk cargoes.
e) Bring any identified statutory non-compliance to the attention of the Administration in accordance with the applicable authorization and reporting procedures.

8. Responsibilities of Port Authorities and Terminal Operators

8.1. KPT, PQA, GPA and other relevant port and terminal authorities are requested to circulate this Marine Circular to bulk cargo terminals, stevedores, cargo handling companies and port facility operators.

8.2. Port authorities and terminal operators shall review their cargo handling procedures to ensure consistency with the applicable IMSBC Code requirements.

8.3. Particular attention shall be given to:

a) Verification of cargo documentation before loading.
b) Cargo identification and segregation.
c) Safe loading and unloading procedures.
d) Appropriate cargo sampling and testing arrangements.
e) Prevention of cargo contamination and unsafe mixing.
f) Emergency preparedness and coordination with the vessel's Master.

8.4. The BLU Code and its associated BLU Manual should be used as appropriate to support safe loading and unloading operations and effective cooperation between the ship and terminal.

9. Cargo Fumigation, Fire Safety and Emergency Preparedness

9.1. Masters, shipowners and cargo operators shall ensure that cargo-specific fire, explosion, toxic gas, oxygen depletion and self-heating hazards are adequately addressed.

9.2. Where fumigation is undertaken, the relevant IMO recommendations concerning the safe use of pesticides in ships, including MSC.1/Circ.1264/Rev.1 and MSC.1/Circ.1358/Rev.1, as applicable, shall be observed.

9.3. The applicability of fixed gas fire-extinguishing systems shall be assessed in accordance with the relevant SOLAS Chapter II-2 requirements and IMO guidance, including MSC.1/Circ.1395/Rev.7.

9.4. Shipowners and Masters shall ensure that appropriate emergency procedures are established for cargo fires, self-heating, toxic gas release, cargo liquefaction and other foreseeable cargo-related emergencies.

10. Inspection and Compliance

10.1. Compliance with the applicable IMSBC Code requirements may be verified during Flag State inspections, Port State Control inspections, statutory surveys and other relevant inspections conducted by the Administration or its authorized representatives.

10.2. Any deficiency relating to cargo documentation, cargo declarations, cargo handling, safety procedures or other applicable requirements shall be addressed in accordance with the relevant statutory provisions.

10.3. Vessels shall not be permitted to undertake unsafe cargo operations where the applicable statutory requirements have not been satisfied.

11. Implementation and Action Required

11.1. All Pakistani shipowners, operators, Masters, ROs, port authorities, terminal operators, shippers and cargo interests are hereby advised to take necessary measures for the implementation of Amendment 08-25.

11.2. Shipowners and operators are encouraged to complete their internal review and preparation before 1 January 2027.

11.3. All concerned stakeholders shall ensure that the latest applicable edition of the IMSBC Code is available and that relevant personnel are adequately familiarized with the amended requirements.

11.4. Any difficulty or matter requiring technical clarification concerning the implementation of this Circular may be referred to Chief Nautical Surveyor of the Directorate General Ports & Shipping, Ministry of Maritime Affairs, Karachi.

12. Enforcement

12.1. This Circular shall be read in conjunction with SOLAS 1974, as amended, the IMSBC Code and other applicable international maritime instruments and national maritime legislation.

12.2. The requirements of Amendment 08-25 shall become mandatory internationally from 1 January 2027. This Circular does not alter the international implementation dates or permit any relaxation of existing mandatory requirements.

12.3. All concerned are requested to ensure strict compliance with the applicable provisions.

This Circular is issued with the Approval of the Competent Authority.



Capt. Rafaqat Hussain
Chief Nautical Surveyor
Directorate General Ports & Shipping Wing Karachi
Ministry of Maritime Affairs

Distribution:

1. The Director General, Ports & Shipping Wing, Karachi.
2. The Principal Officer, Mercantile Marine Department, Karachi.
3. The Chief Engineering & Ship Surveyor, (CESS)
4. Recognized Organizations authorized by the Administration.
5. The Chairman, Karachi Port Trust
6. Chairman Port Qasim Authority
7. Chairman Gwadar Port Authority.
8. The Chairman, Pakistan National Shipping Corporation (PNSC), Karachi.
9. All Public and Private Maritime Training Institutes.