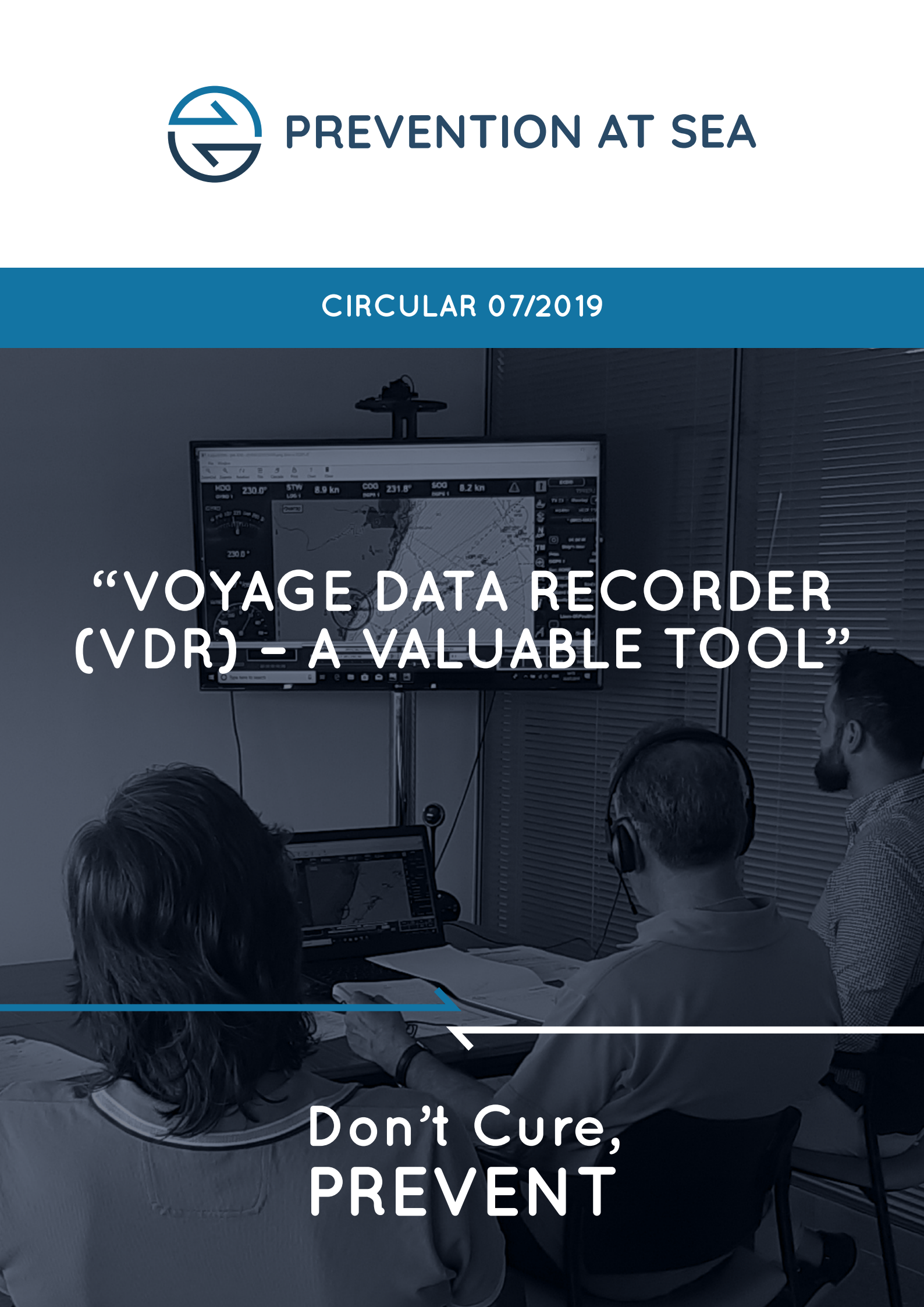




PREVENTION AT SEA

CIRCULAR 07/2019



“VOYAGE DATA RECORDER
(VDR) – A VALUABLE TOOL”

Don't Cure,
PREVENT

“Voyage Data Recorder (VDR) – A valuable tool”

Case: Recently, during a H.E.L.M.E.T. (Human Element Maritime Enhancement Tool) assessment onboard a cargo vessel, the PaSea Assessor noticed that the Deck Officers were not familiar with the procedure to retain the VDR data in the event of an incident. Additionally, relevant instructions for the proper operation of the voyage data recorder were not found to be posted next to the VDR.

This can create grounds for vessel's detention, if it is evidenced that the system is not properly working and that the assigned crew is not familiar with system's operation and maintenance.

Port State Control Officers receive specific guidelines on what items to examine during an inspection and VDR is in their list when it comes to 'Safety of Navigation'.



A common deficiency imposed by PSC Officers in regard to VDR is;

'Voyage Data Recorder (VDR) / Simplified Voyage Data Recorder (S-VDR) Malfunction'.

Regulatory Framework

As per SOLAS V/18.8 “the voyage data recorder (VDR) system, including all sensors, shall be subjected to an annual performance test. The test shall be conducted by an approved testing or servicing facility to verify the accuracy, duration and recoverability of the recorded data. In addition, tests and inspections shall be conducted to determine the serviceability of all protective enclosures and devices fitted to aid location. A copy of the certificate of compliance issued by the testing facility, stating the date of compliance and the applicable performance standards, shall be retained on board the ship.”



OCIMF VIQ 7 – Chapter 4.11 reads:

“In the event of an incident the data retained in the VDR can be invaluable in accident investigations, ship's crew should be aware of how to retain this data and prevent it from being overwritten.”

The current performance specification for VDR's only requires that the data is stored for a minimum of 12 hours before being overwritten. Since many existing VDRs simply meet the required 12 hours, if no action is taken to preserve the recorded VDR data within 12 hours of the start of an incident, the data will be lost or overwritten, thereby negating the purpose of having a VDR installed.”

Proper retention of VDR data can be used as evidence during incident investigation and possible reduction in insurance losses for the vessel's Manager.

'KEY POINTS' TO AVOID COMPLICATIONS WITH THE VDR

- Operator's procedures should be provided for the operation of the VDR as well as ensuring that the Navigational Officers are familiar with the VDR data retention procedure in the event of an incident.
- It should be verified that the VDR is operational and free of alarm indications.
- A VDR System Certificate of Compliance should be provided and annual tests should be performed in accordance with SOLAS requirements.
- An operational function check should be conducted daily and be recorded either on a checklist or in the deck operations logbook/ bell book.

BEST PRACTICE



- In the Company's Familiarization checklist, a specific reference is suggested to be included in regard to the VDR operation, proper downloading and recovery of VDR data.
- During the VDR annual inspection test, it is recommended that a specific training/familiarization is conducted for the Deck Officers by the Service Engineer.

'VDR Remote Navigation Audit' – Take advantage of your VDR

A **Remote Navigation Audit** provides an objective independent check by a trained auditor that the correct procedures are being followed on board. The human element is generally acknowledged to be a major factor in many shipping incidents and accidents, therefore, a remote navigation audit reduces the risk of future incidents/accidents from occurring.

OCIMF now is promoting this, as quoted below;

[VIQ 4.10.48] It is strongly preferred that VDR data is used for evaluation of navigation practices and compliance with the vessel operator's procedures.

TMSA [Element 5 – Stage 4.1] According to TMSA 3, where it is impractical for a vessel to be audited within the 12-month period due to trading pattern, then an unannounced remote audit by an independent contractor, including VDR downloads may be used.



'Prevention at Sea' solution

Prevention at Sea offers the VDR Audit, with the aim to ensure that ships are in compliance with applicable international requirements and conventions as well as relevant industry standards.

VDR Analysis is carried out in accordance with the OCIMF guidelines "Recommendations on the Proactive Use of VDR Information". Relevant documentation needed for the commencement of a VDR Audit will be provided prior commencement of the process.

The PaSea VDR report covers various aspects of navigation, including compliance with company's navigational procedures/practices and TMSA & VIQ requirements.



For more information in regard to PaSea VDR Audits, please contact us!

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FOR MORE INFORMATION,
PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO CONTACT US.



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