

ORGANIZATION OF THE INVESTIGATION, LIFTING UP AND PROTECTION OF SUNKEN SHIPS AND THEIR REMAINS (WRECKS) IN ESTONIA

Proceeding from the Estonian Merchant Shipping Code (Riigi Teataja 1991, 46-48, 577) and the Cultural Heritage Act (Riigi Teataja 1 1994, 24, 391), the Government of the Republic decrees:

1. Sunken ships, their remains (wrecks), installations, freight and other property (hereinafter wrecked ships) located in Estonian territorial and interior seas and inland water bodies, provided they do not have an owner, shall be the property of the state. Lifting up the wrecked ships from territorial and interior seas and economic activity connected with it shall be organized by the National Maritime Board.

2. Certification of the wrecked ships as cultural monuments as well their protection and investigation shall be organized by the Central Board of Antiquities in cooperation with the Estonian Maritime Museum. Lifting up the certified wrecked ships shall take place under the surveillance of the Central Board of Antiquities and the Estonian Maritime Museum.

3. It shall be forbidden for Estonian and foreign institutions, enterprises, organizations and individuals not possessing a respective permission to search for, investigate or lift up wrecked ships in Estonian territorial and interior seas and inland water bodies.

It shall be established that permissions to exercise the above mentioned activities shall be issued by the Central Board of Antiquities with the knowledge of the National Maritime Board.

Accidental finds of cultural value shall be regarded as being under temporary protection from the moment of their

discovery, of which must immediately be reported to the Central Board of Antiquities or the Estonian Maritime Museum.

4. Foreigners shall only be allowed to take part in underwater archaeological expeditions organized by Estonian scientific institutions and museums with the permission of the Central Board of Antiquities, as well as in underwater works carried out under the surveillance of the National Maritime Board.

5. The list of goods requiring a special permit for their import into or export from Estonian customs territory and of goods prohibited for import into or export from the Estonian customs territory and of ministries granting such special permits, endorsed by the Government of the Republic decree No. 32 of 25 January 1994 on the Establishment of Special Conditions for the Import, Export and Transit of Certain Goods (Riigi Teataja 1 1994, 10, 149) shall be complemented, after the words "radio transmission apparatus" in paragraph 10, with the words, "diving gear" (breathing apparatus).

6. Implementation of this decree shall be supervised by the Central Board of Antiquities, National Maritime Board, National Police Board, National Customs Board, State Sea Inspection Office and National Board of Borderguard, involving for this purpose members of the Defence League on a voluntary basis, if needed.

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Minister of Culture
and Education *(Peeter Olesk)*
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Secretary of State *(Imre Siit)*