



The Bahamas Maritime Authority

BMA INFORMATION BULLETIN No. 71

APPROVAL (CERTIFICATION) OF MARINE EQUIPMENT

Guidance and Instructions for Shipowners, Managers, Masters, Bahamas Recognised Organisations and Bahamas Approved Nautical Inspectors

Note: This Bulletin supersedes the previous BMA Information Bulletin No. 71 and should be read in conjunction with IMO Circular MSC.1/Circ.1221 and BMA Information Bulletin No. 8.

1. General

- 1.1. Certain individual items of equipment provided onboard to meet the requirements of International Conventions must be “approved by the Administration”. This Bulletin gives guidance on methods of approval for such individual items of equipment.
- 1.2. Equipment which is fully certificated to the standard or specification referenced in an International Convention, or associated Code, by any Bahamas Recognised Organisation (RO) is considered approved for routine applications onboard Bahamian ships. Any proposal to use RO approved equipment in a innovative manner must be notified to the BMA and may be subject to additional testing and certification to be agreed between the BMA and the RO.

- 1.3. This Bulletin does not address the approval of “arrangements” (i.e. systems, assemblies, combination of components) installed onboard a Bahamas flagged vessel. Neither does it deal with the approval of novel equipment as an equivalent, or alternative, arrangement to an International Convention requirement. The general procedure for consideration of such applications is contained in BMA Information Bulletin No. 8.

2. Certification of Equipment

- 2.1. Unless as otherwise stated in this Bulletin, the BMA will normally not be directly involved in the process of certification of marine equipment unless the equipment is manufactured in The Bahamas.
- 2.2. In the absence of any standards specified in the Convention/Code, the RO shall provide the BMA with information and recommend an alternative suitable manufacturing, testing, and performance standard.
- 2.3. In approving, or verifying the certification of, equipment the Recognised Organisation shall take into consideration the guidelines outlined in IMO MSC Circ/1221. Any certificate attesting to the conformity of any item of equipment shall be valid for not more than five (5) years, and shall be subject to annual inspection and/or verification of the manufacturer’s process.

3. Verification of Equipment not Certificated by a Bahamas Recognised Organisation.

- 3.1. Equipment which is not certificated by a Bahamas RO will be considered by the BMA on a case by case basis. The process may involve verification, by a Bahamas RO, of certification that has been issued to the equipment.
- 3.2. Where verification of such equipment is required by the BMA, the RO must exercise professional judgment concerning the extent of verification of the equipment approval or certification. This may include an inspection of any approval certification, examination and review of supporting test documentation and/or test of a sample item. However, the verification must be of sufficient scope to guarantee that the equipment meets the required manufacturing, testing, and performance standards.

- 3.3. External factors that might influence the extent of verification include:
- i. The RO and industry experience with a particular piece of equipment,
 - ii. Compliance by the manufacturer with any conditions associated with the certification or approval,
 - iii. Time elapsed since certification or approval.
- 3.4. Equipment may only be accepted when the original / re-validated certification or approval has been completed within the five year period preceding the proposed installation.
- 3.5. If the verification process identifies that an item of equipment does not fully comply with the international requirements, the RO shall notify the BMA of the area(s) of non-compliance and provide a recommendation for acceptance or rejection.