



The Bahamas Maritime Authority

BMA INFORMATION BULLETIN No. 73

PERIODICAL BOTTOM INSPECTION OF PASSENGER SHIPS

Guidance and Instructions for Ship-owners, Managers, Masters, Bahamas Recognised Organisations and Bahamas Approved Inspectors

Note: This Bulletin supersedes the previous BMA Information Bulletin no. 73 and replaces Instruction to Classification Societies No. 3. The Bulletin is to be read in conjunction with IMO Assembly Resolution A.948 (23)

1. General

- 1.1. SOLAS Chapter I requires an inspection of the outside of the ship's bottom to be carried out as part of the annual renewal survey for the issue of a Passenger Ship Safety Certificate. Examination of the ship's bottom is normally to be carried out in drydock.
- 1.2. This Bulletin provides guidance and instructions on the Bahamas requirements in relation to such inspections. Any application for consideration of a proposal that falls outside these requirements shall be submitted, with the supporting technical justification, to the vessel's Recognised Organisation in accordance with the procedure set out in BMA Information Bulletin no. 8.

2. Inspection of the Outside of the Ship's Bottom in Drydock and In-water

- 2.1. Methods are available to satisfactorily examine a ship's hull and in some cases, to perform the measurement of rudder and tailshaft wear while the ship is in water. High performance hull coatings are designed to extend the coating maintenance period.

- 2.2. It is recognised that there is a need to harmonise Classification and Statutory requirements for the drydocking of passenger ships, taking into consideration the survey guidelines of IMO Assembly Resolution A.948 (23) as amended. Therefore for all passenger ships, the inspection of the outside of the ship's bottom must be carried out in drydock at least twice in any five year period.*
- 2.3. The remaining annual inspections of the outside of the ship's bottom may be carried out in-water provided that an appropriate Classification Society notation for in-water survey is assigned to the ship, and:
- i. the interval between bottom inspections in drydock does not exceed 36 months, and
 - ii. the ship is arranged for in-water survey of the hull. Where practical, tailshaft wear-down, rudder pintle clearance and examination of propeller, stabilising apparatus and other protuberances (as deemed necessary by the Recognised Organisation) are able to be carried out.
- 2.4. Acceptance of an application for in-water inspection of the ships bottom is also subject to the following conditions:
- i. The Owner shall request the Recognised Organisation to approve the in water inspection at least four (4) weeks in advance of the intended date of the inspection. The Owner's proposed schedule and the conditions for performing the in water inspection must be acceptable to the Recognised Organisation to allow effective planning and execution,
 - ii. The Master of the vessel shall confirm in writing that the vessel, to his best knowledge, has not sustained any grounding or contact damage since the previous bottom inspection and that nothing unusual has been observed to suspect that any part of the ship's bottom or protuberances has been otherwise damaged,
 - iii. The Recognised Organisation shall review the vessel survey records to confirm current satisfactory condition of hull and machinery,
 - iv. The inspection must be carried out by a diving company which is approved by the Recognised Organisation. Visibility and water conditions must be suitable to provide sufficient evidence to be able

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- to draw a conclusion that the hull inspection requirements have been met and the hull is in satisfactory condition.
- v. The in water inspection is to be performed under the direct supervision and to the satisfaction of the attending exclusive RO surveyor(s) and shall include video recording of the ship's hull by the diver.
- 2.5 The Recognised Organisation shall submit their recommendation to the BMA for acceptance of in-water inspection where the conditions specified in Section 2.3 and 2.4 are not satisfied

3. Vessels under 15 Years Old

- 3.1. For ships of less than 15 years of age (at the time the relevant docking is due), an application may be made to permit one bottom inspection in drydock in any five year period*, however, the interval between drydockings must not exceed 5 years. All applications shall be supported by appropriate technical information:
- i. confirmation that conditions in ii and 2.4 are satisfied.
 - ii. confirmation that there is no overdue Condition of Class, Recommendation, Memoranda or similar note relating to a defect in any part of the ship's structure or machinery that affects the ship's bottom. In case of outstanding items, special consideration will be given for ships which are able to permanently rectify those items concurrent with the Passenger Ship Safety Certificate renewal survey due.
- 3.2. The application referred to in 3.1 is to be submitted to the Recognised Organisation for consideration prior to it submitting the final application, together with its recommendation, to the BMA for review.
- 3.3. The BMA will review the application, taking account of all factors, including the recent performance of the ship and Managers.

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4. Inspection Window

The bottom inspection, either performed in water or in drydock, shall be carried out within the normal allowable window for Passenger Ship Safety Certificate renewal survey i.e. within the 3 months window before the due date of the survey.

5. Applying for In-water Inspection

- 5.1. Recognised Organisations are authorised to directly consider and, if satisfactory, approve applications for all ships for in water inspection, in order to achieve the intended two bottom inspections in drydock in any five year period*, as set out in section 2 of this instruction. Applications for ships which are unable to comply with any part of section 2 are to be forwarded to the BMA for consideration, together with the recommendation of the Recognised Organisation.
- 5.2. Any application for ships of less than 15 years of age, at the time when the relevant docking is due, to convert one inspection in drydock in any five year period* to an in water inspection are to be forwarded by the Recognised Organisation together with its recommendation to the BMA for consideration.

6. Monitoring of the Bottom Inspection Regime

- 6.1. Recognised Organisations shall advise the BMA of the outcome of any in water inspection that identifies the need for a further examination of the vessel and / or remedial action to be taken with the ship in drydock.
- 6.2. In order to monitor the effectiveness of the bottom inspection regime, Recognised Organisations are required to advise the BMA where any ship has carried out a bottom inspection in water under the provisions of section 2 of this document. The advice shall include a reference to the relevant survey report which must either be available on-line or provided as soon as possible. The survey report shall include an assessment of the condition of the hull coating, structure, and all remaining underwater parts, acceptability of measurements taken and other relevant findings.

7. Initial Application of Statutory Regulations to Passenger Ships

Where a new Regulation is required to be applied at the “first drydocking”, the BMA requires it to be applied as if a passenger ship is drydocked twice in any five year period*, regardless of the age of the passenger ship. This policy is not applicable if a date is otherwise stipulated in the Regulation, or any other additional IMO guidance.

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