



The Bahamas Maritime Authority

BMA INFORMATION BULLETIN No. 99

SURVEY AND INSPECTIONS OF SHIPS OPERATING SOLELY WITHIN BAHAMIAN TERRITORIAL WATERS OR THE CARIBBEAN REGION

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

Note: This Bulletin is to be read in conjunction with the Code of Safety for Caribbean Cargo Ships (CCSS Code) and the Code of Safety for Small Commercial Vessels trading in the Caribbean Region (SCV Code)

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Bahamas applies the following two Codes which have been developed to provide a regional safety standard for small ships engaged on voyages in the Caribbean Region¹:
 - i. The Code of Safety for Caribbean Cargo Ships (CCSS Code)
 - ii. The Code of Safety for Small Commercial Vessels (SCV Code)Both Codes are available on the BMA website (www.bahamasmaritime.com).
- 1.2. These Codes are applicable to new ships and, as far as practicable, to existing ships. The provisions of the Codes will facilitate the operation of small ships of less than 500 gross tonnage (GT) to which the provisions of the major international Conventions are not applicable thus ensuring a transparent and achievable level of safety for such ships and the personnel onboard.
- 1.3. A new ship means a ship constructed on or after 01st January 2007.

¹ *Caribbean Region* means an area bounded by a line from a point on the east coast of the United States of America in latitude 35° 00' north, to a point 5° 00' south, 33° 00' west; thence to a point 10° 00' south, 33° 00' west; thence to a point on the coast of Brazil in latitude 10° 00' south; thence northward along the coast of Continental America to a point in latitude 35° 00' north, on the east coast of the United States of America.

2. Application

- 2.1. The Codes are not applicable to:
- i. military and government ships not used for commercial purposes
 - ii. pleasure craft not engaged in trade; and
 - iii. fishing vessels
- 2.2. The Codes are applicable to all Bahamian registered vessels that are engaged solely on voyages within the Caribbean region, including Bahamian domestic voyages, as follows.
- i. The Code of Safety for Caribbean Cargo Ships (CCSS Code or Caribbean Cargo Ship Safety Code) applies to **cargo** ships (not passenger ships or high speed crafts) that are greater than 24 meters in length but less than 500 GT. Cargo ships exceeding these parameters shall comply with the applicable international requirements.
 - ii. Code of Safety for Small Commercial Vessels operating in the Caribbean (SCV Code) applies to all commercial cargo and passenger vessels of less than 24 metres but more than 5 metres in length and which carry not more than 150 passengers or provide overnight accommodation for up to 50 passengers. In addition to the exclusions in 2.1 above, the Code does not apply to the following:
 - a vessel holding a valid Passenger Ship Safety Certificate (PSSC) issued under the provisions of the International Convention on the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, as amended (SOLAS) or Caribbean Cargo Ship Safety Certificate, as appropriate;
 - a boat forming part of a vessel's lifesaving equipment that is used to carry passengers only in emergencies or during emergency exercises.

Passenger ships exceeding these parameters shall comply with the relevant international requirements. Cargo ships exceeding 24 meters shall be comply with the requirements as outlined in 2.2.i above.

3. Inspection and Surveys

- 3.1. The survey of ships to which these Codes apply shall be carried out by either:
- one of the eight Recognised Organisations (RO) which are the Classification Societies, as defined in BMA Information Bulletin No. 3 or
 - a Bahamas Approved Nautical Inspector who has specific authorisation to survey vessels in accordance with these Codes.

Note: The ROs will only conduct surveys on ships constructed to IACS requirements.

- 3.2. Vessels surveyed under the Codes must also be subjected to the Bahamas Annual Inspection for issuance of a Flag State Certificate of Inspection as outlined in Bulletin No. 66.
- 3.2.2. If the CCSS or SCV survey is carried out by an RO then the Owner must ensure that an Annual Inspection is also made in accordance with that Bulletin.
- 3.2.3. However if the CCSS or SCV survey is made by a Bahamas Approved Nautical Inspector the Annual Inspection will be conducted concurrently but the vessel will also be subject to an occasional Inspection by an officer of the BMA.
- 3.3. A list of Bahamas Approved Nautical Inspectors authorized to carry out surveys for the issuance of the CCSS or SCV Certificate will be made available on the website: www.bahamasmaritime.com

4. Issue or Endorsement of Certificates

- 4.1 A CCSS or SCV Certificate will be issued after an initial or renewal survey of a ship which complies with the requirements of the applicable Code. In the case of a CCSS Certificate it should be supplemented by a Record of Equipment and Ship Information which should be permanently attached thereto.
- 4.2 For an existing ship, any areas of non-compliance shall be brought to the attention of the BMA in accordance with the guidelines of BMA Information Bulletin no. 8.

5. Maintenance of Conditions after Survey

The owner or master of every ship to which this Bulletin applies shall ensure that the condition of the ship and its equipment is maintained to conform with the provision of the applicable Code and to ensure that the ship, in all respects, remains fit to proceed to sea.

6. Extensions, Exemptions and Equivalent Arrangements

Applications for extensions, exemptions or acceptance of equivalent arrangements are to be submitted to the RO, or if an RO is not used then the London or Nassau Office of the BMA in accordance with BMA Information Bulletin no. 8.

7. Manning and Qualification of Crew

- 7.1 All ships shall be manned in accordance with the Safe Manning Document (SMD) issued by BMA. Application for an SMD shall be submitted to the Registrar at the time of Registration. Requests for any subsequent amendment to the SMD shall be submitted to either the:
- Technical Officer of the BMA in Nassau, or
 - Manning Department of the BMA in London at stcw@bahamasmaritime.com
- 7.2 Manning levels in accordance with the SMD and the qualifications of ship's Master, officers and crew shall be verified at the time of survey and inspection.

8. Marking of Vessel

- 8.1. All ships shall be marked in accordance with the Section 10 of the Merchant Shipping Act. The marking shall be permanent and conspicuous. The permanent marking may be made by :
- raised lettering, cutting in, or
 - centre punching, or
 - any other equivalent method of marking the ship's name so that the marking is not easily expunged.
- 8.2. In addition, all ships over 100 gross tonnage shall be marked with the vessel's IMO Number. If an IMO number has not already been assigned, the IMO Number Form, which is available from the Registrar, shall be completed and returned to the Registrar for processing.

9. Delivery voyages

For the purposes of a delivery voyage, the ship shall be issued the applicable international certificate in accordance with the vessel's characteristic, e.g. size, type, tonnage, etc. taking into consideration Section 6 above.