



# The Bahamas Maritime Authority

## BMA INFORMATION BULLETIN No. 109

### IMO UNIQUE COMPANY AND REGISTERED OWNER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER SCHEME

#### 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 IMO Resolution MSC.160(78) and BMA Information Bulletin No: 57.*

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#### 1. General

- 1.1. This Bulletin is intended to give guidance on obtaining and then notifying the Bahamas Maritime Authority (BMA) of the Company<sup>1</sup> and Registered Owner<sup>2</sup> Unique Identification Number (Number).
- 1.2. The Unique Identification Number Scheme (The Scheme) and the requirements of SOLAS Regulation IX-1/3-1 were adopted by the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) at its eightieth session. Details of this Scheme are outlined in Appendix 1.
- 1.3. The Scheme will be deemed to have been accepted by IMO member States on 1 July 2008 and will enter into force on 1 January 2009.

#### 2. Who has to have a Number?

- 2.1. A permanent and Unique Number is required to be assigned to all Companies and Registered Owners managing any ship of 100 gross tonnes and above engaged on international voyages.

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<sup>1</sup> Company is the entity responsible for the management of the ship in accordance with the ISM Code

<sup>2</sup> Registered Owner is the person or corporation which has produced evidence of title in accordance with the MSA and is on the Certificate of Registry

- 2.2.** The BMA considers that any vessel or offshore unit which is operating outside Bahamian territorial waters, regardless of whether it is operating in another State's territorial waters, is engaged on an international voyage.

### **3. How to obtain a Number**

- 3.1.** Registered Owners and Companies can obtain their Number directly from Lloyd's Register Fairplay (LRF) free of charge. LRF details are as follows:

Lloyd's Register – Fairplay Ltd  
Lombard House  
3 Princess Way  
Redhill  
Surrey RH1 1UP  
U.K.

Tel: (+44) 1737 379000

Fax: (+44) 1737 379001

Email: [owners-data-feedback@lrfairplay.com](mailto:owners-data-feedback@lrfairplay.com)

The LRF website [www.imonumbers.lrfairplay.com](http://www.imonumbers.lrfairplay.com) has a free user registration system that allows registered users to look up Numbers as well as to request Numbers.

- 3.2.** Numbers can also be obtained from Bahamas Recognised Organisations (ROs) which issue Safety Management Certificates and Documents of Compliance.
- 3.3.** The Number consists of seven digits and begins with the letters "IMO" followed by either "Company" or "Registered Owner", then followed by the seven digits, e.g. IMO Company Number 1234567.
- 3.4.** The assigned Number remains with a Company/Registered Owner in perpetuity. If there is a merger of Companies, LRF, as a general policy, will assign the Number of the larger Company to the new amalgamated entity with the Number of the smaller entity being discarded.

#### **4. Implementation**

- 4.1.** The Bahamas is implementing the Scheme with immediate effect as of the date of this Bulletin. Companies and Registered Owners with applicable ships (see 2.1. above) are therefore required to notify the BMA of the Numbers assigned to them without delay. This policy is to ensure that ships comply with the requirements prior to the date of entry into force, i.e. 1 January 2009.
- 4.2.** The Continuous Synopsis Record (CSR) (insertion of Registered Owner and Company Numbers) will have to be reissued prior to 1 January 2009.
- 4.3** In accordance with the provisions of SOLAS 1974, as amended, Regulation IX-1/3-1.5, the International Safety Management Code (ISM Code) and International Code for the Security of Ships and Port Facilities (ISPS Code) certificates, which are issued by the Bahamas Recognised Organisations, shall be amended to include the IMO Company number when the affected certificate is issued or renewed on or after 1 January 2009

#### **5 Fees**

- 5.1** The fee for a Continuous Synopsis Record (CSR), including processing, is GB£105 or US\$150.
- 5.2** The Continuous Synopsis Record (CSR) will be returned to the applicant via courier. The courier fee is GB£43 or US\$60 for up to a maximum of five (5) CSR.

## APPENDIX 1

Ref. T1/14.01

Circular letter No. 2554/Rev.1  
7 February 2007

To: All IMO Member States  
Contracting Governments to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974  
United Nations and Specialized Agencies  
Intergovernmental Organizations  
Non-governmental Organizations in consultative status

Subject: **Implementation of IMO Unique Company and Registered Owner Identification Number Scheme (resolution MSC.160(78))**

### GENERAL

1 The IMO Unique Company and Registered Owner Identification Number Scheme was introduced through the adoption by the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC), at its seventy-eighth session (12 to 21 May 2004), of resolution MSC.160(78), as a measure to enhance maritime safety, security and environmental protection, and to facilitate the prevention of maritime fraud. Its purpose is to assign a permanent number for identification purposes to each company and/or registered owner managing ships of 100 gross tonnage and above engaged on international voyages. Additionally, Administrations are invited to participate in the scheme to the extent they desire by assigning an IMO unique company and registered owner identification number (hereinafter, referred to as "Number") to each company and/or registered owner managing ships of 100 gross tonnage and above not engaged on international voyages. The procedures for the implementation of resolution MSC.160(78) were circulated by means of Circular letter No.2554, dated 24 June 2004.

2 The Committee, at its eightieth session (11 to 20 May 2005), adopted the proposed new SOLAS regulation XI-1/3-1 on the company and registered owner identification number and amendments to SOLAS regulation XI-1/5 on the continuous synopsis record (resolution MSC.194(80)), which should be deemed to have been accepted on 1 July 2008 and should enter into force on 1 January 2009.

3 MSC 80 also adopted amendments to the International Management Code for the Safe Operation of Ships and for Pollution Prevention (ISM Code) (resolution MSC.195(80)) and to the International Code for the Security of Ships and of Port Facilities (International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code) (resolution MSC.196(80)) introducing references to the company and registered owner identification number.

4 MSC 80 agreed that the procedures for the implementation of resolution MSC.160(78) outlined in Circular letter No.2554 should be reviewed and revised as necessary by the Sub-Committee on Flag State Implementation (FSI), at its fourteenth session (5 to 9 June 2006).

5 The Committee, at its eighty-second session (29 November to 8 December 2006), considered the outcome of the review by FSI 14 of the procedures for obtaining the Numbers, and the procedures in place for maintaining the integrity of the scheme. This resulted in the addition of a web service, revised data exchange procedures between Administrations and Lloyd's Register-Fairplay (LRF) and the reporting of the name-style of registered owners as recorded by national Administrations in their jurisdiction. The Committee approved the present circular letter, noting the concurrent decision by the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC), at its fifty-fifth session (9 to 13 October

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2006). Having also considered that the operational aspects of the numbering scheme may need to be further developed, based on the experience gained, the Committee requested the Secretariat to make any necessary adjustments, in co-operation with the manager of the scheme, in order to improve the service to be provided to Member States.

#### PRINCIPLES

6 The IMO Unique Company and Registered Owner Identification Number Scheme is managed, in parallel with the IMO Ship Identification Number Scheme (resolution A.600(15)) and procedures for the implementation thereof (Circular letter No.1886/Rev.3), without charge by LRF. The scheme may assign Numbers to companies and/or registered owners of ships not required to have IMO ship identification numbers.

7 The Number is a LRF number, allocated at the time of issuance of the documents detailed in paragraph 6 of the Annex to resolution MSC.160(78) or registration of a ship not required to have these documents. The Number consists of seven digits assigned by LRF. The label begins with the letters "IMO" followed by either "Company" or "Registered Owner", then, followed by the seven digits.

8 "Company" has the same meaning as in SOLAS regulation IX/1. "Registered owner" is the owner specified on a ship's certificate of registry issued by an Administration.

9 New companies and/or registered owners managing ships covered by the scheme are assigned a Number by LRF when their ship is registered with a flag Administration. For existing companies and/or registered owners, the Number should be assigned at an early convenient date, such as when any document detailed in paragraph 6 of the annex to resolution MSC.160(78) is issued or renewed.

10 Once assigned, the Number remains unchanged for a company and/or registered owner. When companies and/or registered owners merge, as a matter of general policy, LRF assigns the Number of the larger company and/or registered owner to the new amalgamated entity, while the Number of the smaller entity is frozen and not re-used.

11 LRF maintains a full history audit trail of changes to company and/or registered owner information, with the date of each change recorded. LRF maintains the history of companies and/or registered owners of ships on its database.

12 LRF operates under ISO 9001:2000 quality assurance and is ISO certified for the provisions of publishing and information services to the shipping industry. In order to maintain the integrity of the Numbers in circulation amongst the maritime community, the Administrations should, to the extent allowed by their national law, not publish these Numbers, or allow the Numbers to be viewed or downloaded from their websites, other than on a company-by-company basis.

13 Contracting Governments to SOLAS retain the right to assign the management of the system to another organization in the future or to manage it by itself. If LRF cannot continue to maintain the scheme for any reason, all related information acquired from the scheme should be transferred to the Organization.

**COLLECTION AND TRANSFER OF INFORMATION AND ASSIGNMENT OF NUMBERS ON AN INDIVIDUAL COMPANY /REGISTERED OWNER BASIS**

14 Original information about a company and/or registered owner is collected by the Administration at the time of registration. It is the same information as that routinely collected by Administrations as part of their registration process, namely:

- .1 company/registered owner name-styles;
- .2 country/State of incorporation (registration);
- .3 date of incorporation; and
- .4 full address (operational and registered address) and contact details. LRF records the operational address of companies and registered owners. The operational address can be the address of a head office or a branch office, or a care-of address for the registered owner or company which has been issued with a Document of Compliance (DOC) and managing the ship for which communication details are provided, hereafter called "DOC Company". The LRF database also records the registered address of registered owners but only under the conditions in paragraph 22.

15 During the registration of a ship, the Administration should contact LRF to determine the Number to be assigned to the company or registered owner, either through the present methods established for obtaining Numbers on an individual basis, as described in paragraph 17, or, preferably, through the fleet data exchanges (see paragraphs 18, 19 and 20).

16 Numbers can also be obtained by recognized organizations (ROs) authorized to issue Safety Management Certificates and Documents of Compliance on behalf of Administrations, and by registered owners and companies, for submission to the Administration.

17 The methods for obtaining Numbers on existing registered owners and companies, for assigning a Number to registered owners or companies that have not previously been assigned a Number and for communicating corrected company details on existing records, on an individual basis, are as follow:

- .1 a free website ([www.imonumbers.lrfairplay.com](http://www.imonumbers.lrfairplay.com)) which allows registered users to look up Numbers, by using the available "Search" facility. When the companies or registered owners cannot be identified through the "Search" function, authorized data providers should request the assignment of new Numbers or provide corrective information on existing records. The website has a free user registration system to enhance both the security of the site and the information;
- .2 paper request forms (annexes 1 and 2); and
- .3 a free web service for Administrations to facilitate the provision of individual company and registered owner data from LRF to flag Administrations in an electronic format for ship registration purposes (sections 1.1 and 1.2 of annex 4).

LRF would confirm the updated company information received with the appropriate Administration.

**STANDARDIZED REGULAR ELECTRONIC DATA EXCHANGE BETWEEN ADMINISTRATIONS AND LRF ON A FLEET BASIS**

18 When choosing this recommended option, Administrations would implement a regular electronic data exchange procedure with LRF on a fleet basis (as detailed in section 2 of annex 4, together with the data fields that Administrations should provide electronically (annex 3)) to enable LRF to maintain the integrity of the scheme. The exchanges provide a mechanism to communicate, per ship, changes to registered owners and companies and their IMO Numbers, on a registered fleet basis, and thus synchronise the information held on the registered fleet by both the Administration and LRF.

19 The regular electronic data exchange procedure on a fleet basis includes a standardized two-way flow of data between flag Administrations and LRF on the registered fleet, either by spreadsheet or extensible markup language (XML) file (section 2 of annex 4).

20 LRF would derive the updates to the registered fleet through electronic comparison with its database. New and updated Numbers would then be returned to the flag Administration in an updated spreadsheet or XML file.

21 Regarding the addition of a second company name field, the LRF database records the name-style of registered owners as provided by Administrations for companies registered in their national jurisdictions. LRF can only receive the contents of this field in the XML data format detailed in section 2 of annex 4, since this format should have agreed character sets that are consistent with both the LRF database software and the software of organizations to which LRF supplies data (annex 4, paragraph 2.9).

22 The LRF database also records the registered address of registered owners as provided by Administrations for companies registered in their national jurisdictions. LRF can only receive the contents of this field in the XML data format detailed in section 2 of annex 4, since this format should have agreed character sets that are consistent with both the LRF database software and the software of organizations to which LRF supplies data (annex 4, paragraph 2.9).

**CONSULTATION ON NUMBERS**

23 The LRF website ([www.imonumbers.lrfairplay.com](http://www.imonumbers.lrfairplay.com)), with a free user registration system to enhance both the security of the site and the information available, allows registered users to look up Numbers, by using the available "Search" facility, and Administrations, ROs and companies to communicate corrected company details on existing records.

24 Administrations assume no duty to examine, correct, change, alter, or modify information contained on the LRF free website, or to notify LRF of incorrect information contained on the website. Administrations are not liable for mistakes or errors in the information on the website. This website is also available to companies and/or registered owners, who may use it when completing continuous synopsis records (CSR) (resolution A.959(23)).



25 The Numbers can also be obtained by contacting the national ship registry of the State, the flag of which their ships are entitled to fly or LRF at the following address:

Lloyd's Register -- Fairplay Ltd  
Lombard House  
3 Princess Way, Redhill,  
Surrey, RH1 1UP, UK  
Telephone: (+44) 1737 379000  
Fax : (+44) 1737 379001  
Web : [www.lrfairplay.com](http://www.lrfairplay.com)  
Email : [owners-data-feedback@lrfairplay.com](mailto:owners-data-feedback@lrfairplay.com)

26 The Numbers are also available on the free public website of Equasis ([www.equasis.org](http://www.equasis.org)).

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