



INFORMATION BULLETIN No. 151

SAFETY FAMILIARIZATION AND BASIC TRAINING, INSTRUCTION AND CERTIFICATION

Guidance and Instructions for Bahamas Recognised Organisations, Bahamas Approved Nautical Inspectors, Ship Owners, Managers, Masters, Seafarers, Seafarers Recruitment & Placement Service Providers and Training Providers

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watch-keeping for Seafarers, 1978, as amended (STCW), the associated Code (STCW Code) and Maritime Labour Convention 2006 (MLC 2006) require all seafarers and persons employed or engaged onboard a ship to have safety familiarization and basic training or instructions before being assigned any shipboard tasks or duties.
- 1.2 This Bulletin outlines the training, instruction and certification requirements for persons serving on Bahamian registered ships in accordance with STCW Chapter VI/1 and MLC 2006 Regulation 1.3.2.
- 1.3 The Bulletin should be read in conjunction with *BMA Information Bulletin nos. 81, 86, 103, 121, 127, 137, 140, 147* and any other BMA Information Bulletins relating to training and certification of seafarers.

2. Application

- 2.1 The information in this Bulletin applies to:
 - .1 All persons serving or intending to serve on a Bahamian ships in any capacity,
 - .2 Companies employing, recruiting or selecting the seafarers noted above for service onboard Bahamian ships.

2.2 For the purpose of this Bulletin the following definitions apply:

(i) *Company* is the entity that has accepted responsibility for the assignment of seafarers for service onboard Bahamian registered ships in accordance with the provisions of STCW Regulation I/14. The Registered Owner or ISM Manager shall report the full name and details of such entity (e.g. Manning agents) to the BMA Seafarers and Manning Department. This notification, as well as any changes of the entity, shall be made either by completing the Manning Section of Bahamas form R104 or submitting a Letter of Declaration to this effect (The letter shall be on the headed paper of Registered Owner/ISM Manager).

(ii) *Approved training or instruction* means training or instruction that satisfies the requirements laid down in the STCW convention VI/1 and has been approved as noted in 3.4 of this Bulletin.

(iii) *Basic training or instruction* is training or instruction related to the requirements specified in STCW Code A-VI/1-1, A-VI/1-2, A-VI/1-3 and/or A-VI/1-4.

(iv) *Designated safety or pollution-prevention duties* in the operation of the ship are duties or tasks that have been assigned to the person and which are either included in the muster list, emergency plan, Safety Management System (SMS), job description or other shipboard documentation.

3 General requirements

3.1.1 In accordance with the STCW requirements, The Bahamas requires that all persons, except passengers, serving onboard Bahamian ships receive safety familiarization training or instruction prior to being assigned to their shipboard duties. The BMA considers that this training or instruction, if carried out, satisfies the requirement of personal safety onboard ship as per Regulation 1.3.2 of MLC 2006.

3.1.2 Safety familiarization training or instruction shall be appropriate to the ship on which the person is being employed.

- 3.1.3 Safety familiarization training or instruction shall be carried out by a suitably competent person such as a safety officer. The Company shall ensure that the person(s) are duly qualified for the task and have documentary evidence of their qualification and there should be details of the approach taken to ensure the trainer's knowledge is kept up to date.
- 3.1.4 Safety familiarization training or instruction shall be documented in the SMS includes a record of the persons who have undergone training and the dates of the training/instruction.
- 3.2 In accordance with the STCW Regulation VI/1 requirements, all persons with designated safety or pollution prevention duties serving onboard Bahamian ships shall have a valid Certificate (or Certificates) of Proficiency that relate(s) to the basic training or instruction appropriate to their assigned shipboard duties.
- 3.3 Any basic training or instruction, including any in-service/onboard system, shall satisfy the requirements specified in STCW Code Standard A-VI/1-1, A-VI/1-2, A-VI/1-3 and A-VI/1-4 as applicable and shall take into consideration the relevant IMO model course(s).
- 3.4.1 All basic training or instructions shall be approved by the BMA or by an Organisation/Institution approved by the BMA to undertake the training. Guidance on the approval process is provided in *BMA Information Bulletin no. 86* and the current list of BMA approved Organisations/Institutions is available on the BMA website (www.bahamasmaritime.com).
- 3.4.2 The BMA may also accept basic training that has been approved by an Administration or an Organisation/Institution authorised by the Administration of a country that is party to STCW and with whom The Bahamas has a STCW recognition agreement (*BMA Information Bulletin no. 121* provides a list of countries with whom The Bahamas has a STCW recognition agreement). This acceptance does not apply to safety familiarization training
- 3.6 There is no requirement for a Bahamas Flag State Endorsement (FSE) for safety familiarization or basic training or instruction but if requested by the Company, the BMA may issue a FSE to a seafarer.

- 3.7 Where the training or instruction is computer based or uses video or other electronic medium, the necessary practical elements should also be undertaken to ensure the person has the required competence for any assigned shipboard duties.
- 3.8 The Company shall:
- (i) undertake an assessment of onboard duties in order to determine the content of safety familiarization and basic training/instruction required by persons employed onboard;
 - (ii) be aware of its responsibility in accordance with paragraph 6 of the International Safety Management (ISM) Code, STCW Regulation I/14 and the MLC 2006 Regulation 1.3 to ensure that prior to being assigned to a ship, the persons are of the minimum age and are medically fit to perform their proposed shipboard duties;
 - (iii) have a system to enable the verification of training documents issued.
- 3.9 The Master, who is deemed to be the person with overall responsibility for the ship, shall ensure that each person has the appropriate basic training/instruction and certification, and safety familiarization prior to being assigned shipboard duties.
- 3.10 The seafarer shall ensure that he/she has valid medical certificate and valid training documents at all times.

4 Requirements for basic training or instructions and certification

- 4.1 Any person with designated safety or pollution-prevention duties shall have a valid Certificate of Proficiency (CoP) attesting the competence under the STCW Code A-VI/1-1, A-VI/1-2, A-VI/1-3 and A-VI/1-4 as appropriate for their assigned shipboard duties.
- 4.2 Where basic training or instruction is included in the qualification of a person (Certificate of Competency), a separate CoP is not required.
- 4.3 There is no requirement for refreshment or revalidation of elementary first aid or personal safety and social responsibilities training if within the last 5 years, the seafarer or the shipboard personnel concerned has undergone the safety familiarization training or instructions AND participated in required safety drills that are related to their duties. The BMA will accept a letter from the Company or Master confirming that this criteria has been satisfied.

- 4.4 For the purpose of refresher or revalidation of personal survival techniques and fire prevention & fire fighting training, the BMA may accept documentary evidence of 12 months sea service within the previous 5 years as satisfying the requirement. Alternatively, the seafarers will need to meet one of the following options:
- Refresher training or instruction, OR
 - Documentary evidence that the affected person has completed in-service (on board) training and has experience for maintaining the required standard of competence in personal survival techniques as set out in table STCW A-VI/1-1 and/or fire prevention and fire fighting as set out in table STCW A-VI/1-2, as applicable. The BMA will accept a letter from the Company or Master confirming that this criteria has been satisfied.

5 Application process for issuance of a Bahamas Certificate of Proficiency (CoP) or Bahamas Flag State Endorsement (FSE)

- 5.1 A Bahamas Flag State Endorsement (FSE) is not required for any training or instruction carried out under STCW Chapter VI/1.
- 5.2.1 Notwithstanding 5.1 any person who holds a basic training Certificate of Proficiency (CoP) issued by an administration with which The Bahamas has a STCW recognition agreement may apply for a Bahamas FSE of that document.
- 5.2.2 Notwithstanding 5.1, any person who does not hold a basic training CoP but otherwise satisfies the basic training requirements of relevant STCW Code may also apply for a Bahamas CoP.
- 5.3 Applications must be submitted by the Owner or Company appointed by the owners of the ship with the following information:
- valid medical certificate. (see *BMA Information Bulletin no. 103*), AND
 - documentary evidence of seagoing service. The BMA may accept a letter from the Company attesting the seafarer has served on applicable ship(s) for the required period of time (details of the ship and dates should be included in the letter which should have the Company letterhead), AND
 - documentary evidence of satisfying the standards of competence specified in the STCW Code (for this purpose, any approved training shall make a clear reference to the STCW requirements), AND
 - applicable fee (see *BMA Information Bulletin no. 81*).

- 5.4 The preferred method for submitting seafarer applications is through The Bahamas On-Line Registration Information System (BORIS). However, until BORIS registration has been completed, the seafarer application form can be utilised and forwarded to the nearest BMA office. Full details of BORIS is contained in *BMA Information Bulletin no 137* but all parties should note that the criteria for access to the system :
- (i) Agreement to terms and condition of use,
 - (ii) Notification of Company details as specified in Section 2.2,
 - (iii) Providing details of the Company to which any fees associated with seafarers' documentation will be invoiced, if different from above (i.e. accounting details),
 - (iv) The details of the delivery address for the documentation, if different than (ii) and (iii) above.
- 5.5 Applications should be submitted in a timely manner to ensure there are no delays to the vessel due to missing documentation.
- 5.6 Failure to follow any of these guidelines may result in an application either being delayed or possibly rejected.
- 5.7 Once the application is received, with ALL supporting documentation, it should be processed and the CoP issued within two (2) months from the receipt of application.
- 5.8 If the CoP is not received within two (2) months from receipt of application, the Company or individual seafarer should contact the Seafarers and Manning Department in the Office to which the application was submitted. This will enable the Company or individual seafarer, and the BMA to address any identified problems.
- 5.9 If a Company or individual seafarer requires document/s to be processed within one (1) working day of receipt of application, the BMA should be contacted and notified of the same. The provision of this "fast track" service will be subject to an additional fee.
- 5.10 Correspondence relating to applications will be sent to the Company or individual seafarer as documented in BORIS and/or listed on the application form. All parties are encouraged to provide a generic email address in order to avoid any delays in the application process.

- 5.11 The BMA should immediately be notified of any CoP that is reported as being lost or destroyed. The notification should include the following information:
- Name of seafarer
 - Date of Birth
 - Nationality
 - Affected Bahamas CoP number, if known
 - Request for duplicate certificate, if applicable
- 5.12 A duplicate certificate will be issued, if requested, subject to receiving the above information, copy of a valid medical certificate and the applicable fee (*See BMA Information Bulletin no. 81*).
- 5.13 If the lost CoP is subsequently found and a duplicate has been issued, the Company or individual seafarer shall retain the duplicate Certificate and return the original CoP to the BMA.
- 5.14 The BMA continues to review measures to reduce the loss of documents in transit.
- 5.15 Where documents require amendments, a fee may be charged at the discretion of the BMA.

6 Fees and refunds

- 6.1 The fees for a Bahamas CoP are the same as for other BMA Certificates or Endorsements. Please refer to *BMA Information Bulletin no. 81*.
- 6.2 The "fast track" service specified in 5.9 will be charged as a professional fee. Please refer to *BMA Information Bulletin no. 81*.
- 6.3 For applications where the CoP document has been issued, a refund may not be offered.
- 6.4 If no CoP is issued, then the BMA will charge the bank charges (US\$25) plus an administrative charge of 20% of the document fees.

7 Enquiries

Any queries related to the training requirements can be directed to the BMA's Seafarers & Manning Department at: stcw@bahamasmaritime.com.

8 Revision History

Rev 0 (03 October 2013) – First issue