



INFORMATION BULLETIN No. 86

APPROVAL AND ACCEPTANCE OF SEAFARER TRAINING OR INSTRUCTION

**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) require training and assessment of seafarers to be administered, supervised and monitored and the relevant training or instruction to be approved by a STCW party. There are also training and certification requirements in *IMO Assembly Resolution A. 891 (21)* and some industry standards.
- 1.2 This Bulletin provides guidance on The Bahamas policy and procedures relating to approval and acceptance of seafarer training or instruction for persons employed or engaged onboard Bahamian ships in accordance with the provisions of STCW and the acceptance of training or instruction in accordance with the Maritime Labour Convention 2006 (MLC 2006) and *IMO Assembly Resolution A. 891 (21)*.
- 1.3 The Bulletin should be read in conjunction with *BMA Information Bulletin Nos. 70, 81, 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 generally applies to:

- (i) Training providers carrying out training and assessment of seafarers;
- (ii) Companies who are managing Bahamian ships and engaged in training or instruction onboard Bahamian ships;
- (iii) All persons serving or intending to serve on a Bahamian ship in any capacity;
- (iv) 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:

.1 *Training provider* is an institution, organisation or company applying for approval,

.2 *Company* is the entity that has accepted responsibility for the assignment of seafarers for service onboard Bahamian 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),

.3 *Approved training or instruction* means training or instruction (training/instructions) that satisfies the requirements laid down in the STCW,

.4 *Seafarer* is any person to which the training/instruction requirements apply.

3 General requirements

3.1 Any training/instruction will be assessed taking into consideration the principles outlined in the STCW and any relevant guidelines developed by the IMO and industry.

- 3.2 The BMA will initiate an approval process for training or instructions that is conducted under a quality standard system and which satisfies one of the following criteria:
- (i) The training/instruction is being conducted by a training provider within The Bahamas, OR
 - (ii) The training/instruction is being conducted by an Owner or Company operating Bahamian ships for seafarers who will be sailing on Bahamian ships and such training/instruction only relates to the requirements of STCW Chapters V and VI or shipboard training for ratings in accordance with STCW Chapters II and III.
- 3.3 The BMA may initiate an approval process for other training programme(s) not satisfying the criteria as laid down in 3.2 above at its discretion as an exceptional consideration. The terms and conditions for such approval process will be determined by the BMA individually for each case.
- 3.4 The BMA has approved a number of training providers and a list of the approved training providers is contained on the BMA website (www.bahamasmaritime.com).
- 3.5 Where training/instruction is being carried out in-service onboard a Bahamian ship, the Company shall take into consideration that there are some STCW standards that may have practical elements. The BMA considers that training/instruction solely based on computer, video or other electronic medium may not satisfy the practical elements of many STCW requirements and if such training/instruction is approved by the BMA, a restriction may be imposed on the shipboard duties of persons who have undergone such training/instruction.

4. Acceptance of training or instruction

- 4.1 Any training/instruction carried out by a provider not approved by BMA may be accepted if the training/instruction has been approved by an STCW party with whom the Bahamas has a recognised STCW agreement (see *BMA Information Bulletin 121*).
- 4.2 For the providers of the training/instruction referenced in 4.1 above, the BMA may require an inspection and or review in accordance with the procedure outlined in Section 6 of this Bulletin.

5 Approval process

- 5.1 For applications for a Bahamas approval, the following information, in the English language, shall be submitted to the Seafarers and Manning Department of the BMA:
- (i) Name and address of the training centre and address(es) of any additional location of the training/instruction,
 - (ii) Copy of Quality standard certification, which shall take into consideration STCW AI/6 and a copy of the relevant section of the quality system that makes reference to the training/instruction,
 - (iii) Title of the training/instruction as given in the Convention/Resolution with full reference to Regulation, Code and or Sections,
 - (iv) Scope and objectives of the training/instruction,
 - (v) Entry requirement for candidates,
 - (vi) Training/instruction curricula with full breakdown of course/subject duration, delivery method, etc,
 - (vii) Details of facilities and equipment. Where the training/instruction incorporates computer based or multimedia components, details of the supporting practical requirements, where applicable, shall be provided
 - (viii) Information on any practical demonstration, e.g. training in swimming pool, fire-fighting facilities, etc.,
 - (ix) Assessment process, e.g. continuous assessment during the training/instruction and/or formal examination at the end of the training/instruction,
 - (x) CV for each trainer and the process for maintaining the competency of the trainers and assessors. The Company should be guided by the IMO model course provisions, where available, and ensure that the person(s) are duly qualified for the task and have documentary evidence of their qualification,

- (xi) Details of record keeping and means of providing verification of training/instruction and/or issued certificates. Each record should as a minimum contain details of the persons who have undergone training or instructions, the dates of the training/instruction and details of issued certificate if any: The records shall be readily retrievable and may be maintained in an electronic format.
- (xii) Format or specimen of the proposed document to be issued to the successful participant. The document should contain the following information:
- name of the approved centre or company with its logo, postal address, e-mail address and contact numbers. If different, include contact details to which any queries in relation to the certificate can be sent,
 - Unique document number,
 - Title of the training/instruction certificate,
 - Detail of holder including full name, date of birth and identity document number,
 - STCW or IMO Resolution referring to the specific training/instruction requirement,
 - Clear reference to the successful completion of the required training/instruction or achievement of the level of competence,
 - Reference to approval granted by The Bahamas Maritime Authority,
 - Signature of person authorised to issue the certificate,
 - Signature and photograph of holder of the certificate,
 - Reference to the requirement for the original certificate to be kept available in accordance with STCW Regulation I/2.11 whenever the holder is serving onboard the vessel.
- (xiii) A training/instruction approval fee of US\$90 will be charged for each submitted training/instruction programme.
- (xiv) If the training/instruction has been approved by another STCW party, then a copy of the approval letter shall be enclosed.

5.2 The BMA will review the submitted information and if the review is satisfactory, an interim Approval Document valid, initially for a period of 6 months, will be issued. A copy of the BMA issued approval document shall be maintained by the Company and at the location where the training/instruction is being carried out, if this location is different.

- 5.3 Within 3 months of the issue of the interim approval, the Company will arrange for the BMA, or an Organisation authorised by the BMA to act on their behalf for STCW audits, to attend to conduct an onsite audit and inspection. If the audit is completed satisfactorily, the Approval Document will be issued a period of five (5) years from the initial issuing date. The BMA issued Approval Document shall be maintained by the Company and if applicable, a copy of the Approval Document shall be available at the location where the training/instruction is being carried out.
- 5.4 Once the training/instruction is approved, no changes that may significantly affect the terms of approval should be made without the prior agreement, in writing, of the BMA.
- 5.5 The BMA reserves the right to withdraw, cancel or suspend any training/instruction approved, and/or certificate issued, should the BMA have any concerns with respect to any aspect of the training/instruction which has been, or is being, provided.
- 5.6 If the Approval Document has expired, any training/instruction carried out will not be accepted as approved by the BMA.
- 5.7 A duplicate Approval Document will be issued, if requested, subject to the Approval Document being within the validity date and the BMA receiving the applicable fee (*See BMA Information Bulletin no. 81*).
- 5.8 For the review of documents which require amendments, a fee may be charged at the discretion of the BMA.

6. Inspection and audit

- 6.1 Once the training/instruction is approved, a periodical audit will be conducted by the BMA to verify continued compliance with the condition of approval. The periodical audit must be carried out no later than 1 year prior to the expiry of the approval.
- 6.2 It is the responsibility of the Company to monitor the validity of the Approval Document and make the arrangement with the BMA to undertake the inspection or audit specified in 6.1.

- 6.3 In addition to the periodical audits specified in paragraph 6.1, the BMA may at any time and at short notice, carry out an inspection of the facilities, record keeping and or any element(s) of the approved training/instruction.

7 Fees and refunds

- 7.1 The approval process and any subsequent inspection/audit will be undertaken on a cost recovery basis charged to the provider. This will include but not be limited to the administrative costs, attendance/professional fees, travel expenses and accommodation of the BMA authorised official carrying out the inspection and/or audit.
- 7.2 Each submission for approval of training/instruction will be subject to a non-refundable fee, which is payable at the time of the initial application.
- 7.3 *BMA Information Bulletin No. 81* provides a list of the current fees. However, the discretionary approval mentioned in paragraph 5.8 may differ and be charged as a lump-sum.

8 Enquiries

Any queries related to the approval or acceptance requirements can be directed to the BMA Seafarers & Manning Department at: stcw@bahamasmaritime.com.

9 Revision History

Rev 3.Full revision