The Bahamas Maritime Authority

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The Merchant Shipping (Load Lines) Regulations 2026

Notice to ship owners, managers, Masters, Approved Nautical Inspectors, Recognised Organisations and surveyors

1. Purpose

1.1. This Notice provides instructions and requirements in support of the Merchant Shipping (Load Line) Regulations 2026 ("the Regulations") and the International Convention on Load Lines, 1966, as modified by the Protocol of 1988 (collectively referred to as "the Load Lines Convention").

2. Application

2.1. Schedules contained in this Notice apply to Bahamian ships **and**, where expressly provided for in Part IV of the Regulations, to foreign ships whilst they are in Bahamian waters.

2.2. The schedules do not apply to ships of war, ships solely engaged in fishing, pleasure vessels, and ships that do not go to sea.

3. Introduction

3.1. The Regulations give effect to the Load Line Convention, including all amendments given effect by the Regulations, into Bahamian domestic law.

3.2. The Schedules in this Notice are incorporated into, and have effect through, the Regulations where expressly referenced.

3.3. The Regulations enter into force on 01 April 2026 and give continued effect to the Load Lines Convention, following the repeal of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1976.

3.4. The principal aim of the Load Lines Convention is to reduce the risk of ships sinking due to overloading, instability and breach of watertight integrity. There are also provisions for the survey, certification and inspection of ships for the purpose of ascertaining compliance with the Convention.

3.5. The original Load Lines Convention entered into force on 21 July 1968 and was modified by the 1988 Protocol. The 1988 Protocol harmonised the survey requirements with the surveys carried out under the SOLAS and MARPOL Conventions. The Load Lines Convention has been amended several times since; a full list of the amendments is stated in Schedule 6 of this Notice.

3.6. The Load Lines Convention comprises of Articles and Annexes. The Articles are the principles and rules of the Convention, whereas the Annexes contain the regulations for determining load lines, state the zones, areas and seasonal periods and specify the format of the certification.

3.7. The Articles and Annexes are explained further in Schedules 1 & 2 of this Notice.

3.8. The Load Lines Convention requires the ship's Flag Administration to determine how certain requirements must be implemented. These areas have been highlighted in Schedule 5 of this Notice. Most of the highlighted areas are determined prior to or during the ship's construction by Bahamas Recognised Organisations[1].

3.9. The Load Lines Convention only applies to ships of either 24 metres[2] or above or 150 gross tonnage or above depending on the ship's keel laying date, on international voyages. For Bahamas registered ship to which the Convention does not apply, the requirements for load lines are set out in Schedule 8 of this Notice. These requirements do not apply to; fishing vessels, pleasure vessels (private yachts) and ships that do not go to sea.

4. Multiple Load Line Certificates

4.1. This section provides guidance and sets out the BMA's expectations in support of regulations 9 and 21 of the Merchant Shipping (Load Lines) Regulations 2026, where multiple load line certificates are issued.

4.2. Multiple load line certificates may be directly issued to a ship by the Recognised Organisation. However, the BMA shall be notified of such cases and advised of the vessel's highest deadweight tonnage.

4.3. When a ship is issued with multiple load line certificates:

i. For paper certificates, the unused certificates must be placed in a sealed envelope and kept in the custody of the Master (NOT in the "current certificates" file).

[1] Please refer to Marine Notice 02
[2] 24 metres is approximately 78 feet 9 inches

ii. For electronic certificates, both the active and inactive certificates shall be displayed on the Recognised Organisation's database and shall be capable of being verified. Preferably the system should highlight which certificate is active.

4.4. The following must be verified for issuance or change of Load Lines:

i. The ship must comply fully with all statutory requirements appropriate for a ship of the maximum deadweight corresponding to the minimum freeboard assigned in the certificates issued;
ii. There must be no reduction in safety when sailing at an increased deadweight;
iii. Only one set of load line marks shall be on display at any time, and the other sets shall be obliterated by paint;
iv. The Master must ensure, with a Recognised Organisation surveyor in attendance, that the correct set of marks are displayed together with the corresponding load line certificate, that the other sets of marks are properly obliterated, and that the other load line certificates are in safekeeping and not on display. In the case of Recognised Organisation surveyor unavailability, the change of load line may be carried out on the Master's instructions, provided that arrangements for verification at the next available port have been agreed with the Recognised Organisation;
v. The Master is to make an entry in the ship's Official Logbook on every occasion that the load line marks are changed;
vi. The Recognised Organisation is to ensure that all marks are verified, and all their corresponding load line certificates endorsed at each subsequent load line inspection.

5. Queries

5.1. Any queries on this Notice may be addressed to tech@bahamasmaritime.com or any BMA office.

Schedule 1: Load Lines Convention - Articles

The Load Lines Convention contains a series of Articles which form the underlying requirements of the Convention. The Articles explain which ships the Convention applies to and includes the main requirements, such as exceptions, equivalents and the survey and certification regime.

The Articles contain the requirements for ships and there are also specific requirements for the Contracting Government (either flag or port State responsibilities).

The Articles are applied as follows:

- Articles 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 13, 18, 21 and 23 - further information has been provided in the text below;
- Articles 2, 7, 11, 12, 14, 15 and 22 - the Convention text applies, as applicable to the individual ship; and
- Articles 16, 17, 19, 20, 24 to 34 are specific requirements for the Contracting Government.

Some of the Articles require further clarification on how the Bahamas intends to implement the Article. This has been provided below.

Article 1 General obligation under the Convention

Company's responsibility and definition of 'Company' are stated in the Merchant Shipping (Load Lines) Regulations 2026.

Article 3 General provisions

A ship must not proceed to sea on an international voyage unless it has been surveyed, marked and provided with an International Load Line Certificate, or where appropriate, an International Load Line Exemption Certificate.

The BMA or a Recognised Organisation authorised by the BMA may assign a greater freeboard to a ship than the minimum freeboard determined in accordance with Annex I of the Load Lines Convention.

Articles 4 & 5 Application and exceptions

The Regulations apply the Load Lines Convention as modified by the 1988 Protocol up to and including the most recent amendment (see Schedule 7). This applies to all Bahamas registered ships engaged on international voyages, which:

- if constructed on or after 21 July 1968, is 24 metres or more in length; or

- if constructed before 21 July 1968, is 150gt or more.

The Regulations do not apply to Bahamian or foreign ships which are:

- Pleasure vessels;
- Fishing vessels;
- Ship of wars; or
- Ships solely navigating:
  - the Great Lakes of North America and the River St. Lawrence as far east, as a rhumb line drawn from Cap des Rosiers to West Point, Anticosti Island, and, on the north side of Anticosti Island, the meridian of longitude 63°W;
  - the Caspian Sea;
  - the Plate, Parana and Uruguay Rivers as far east as a rhumb line drawn between Punta Rasa (Cabo San Antonio), Argentina, and Punta del Este, Uruguay

Commercial yachts which comply with the Bahamas Large Charter Yacht Code or Bahamas Passenger Yacht Code will not have to comply with the requirements of the Regulations. This is because the Bahamas Large Charter Yacht Code and Passenger Yacht Code are equivalents to the Load Lines Convention[3].

Article 6 & 8 Exemptions & equivalents

Exemptions and equivalents will only be issued by the BMA in accordance with Article 6 and Article 8 of the Convention

An exemption or equivalent is only valid if it is in writing and if any conditions stated in it are complied with.

Article 9 Approvals for experimental purposes

The BMA may make specific approvals for experimental purposes for a ship to which the Convention applies.

Article 10 Repairs, alterations and modifications

Repairs, alterations and modifications of a major character and outfitting must meet the requirements for a new ship in so far as the BMA or Recognised Organisation deems reasonable and practicable.

[3] Please refer to Marine Notice 98

Article 13 Survey, inspection and marking

The BMA has delegated the surveys and markings required by the Convention to Recognised Organisations. Please refer to Marine Notice 02.

Article 16 Issue of certificates

The BMA has delegated the issue of the International Load Line Certificate to Recognised Organisations. Please refer to Marine Notice 02.

An International Load Line Exemption Certificate will only be issued by the BMA.

Article 18 Form of certificates

The certificates shall be drawn up in the form corresponding to the models given in Annex III to the Convention. The language used on the certificates must be in English.

Article 21 Control

Please refer to Schedule 6: Foreign ships

Article 23 Casualties

The Convention requires the BMA to undertake an investigation into any casualty occurring to a Bahamas registered ship. This requirement is included in the Merchant Shipping Act, 2021 and the Merchant Shipping (Marine Safety Investigations) Regulations 2026.

Schedule 2: Load Lines Convention Annex I Regulations for determining load lines

Application to Bahamian registered ships

Annex I of the Load Lines Convention contains the Convention's technical requirements. This Annex is divided into four Chapters:

- Chapter I – General;
- Chapter II – Conditions of assignment of freeboard;
- Chapter III – Freeboards; and
- Chapter IV – Special requirements for ships assigned timber freeboards.

The requirements stated in Annex I vary depending on when the ship's keel was laid. There are several significant keel laying dates stated in the Convention which are highlighted in the table below. The text of the Load Lines Convention should be referred to for the full requirement.

Table of ship's keel laid dates as applicable to Annex I of the Load Lines Convention

Before 21 July 1968	**On or after 21 July 1968**	**On or after 01 July 2005**	**On or after 01 July 2010**
Ships of 150 gross tonnage and above with a keel laid before 21 July 1968	Ships of 24metres or over with a keel laid on/after 21 July 1968.	Ships of 24metres or over with a keel laid on or after 01 January 2005.	Ships of 24metres or over constructed on or after 01 July 2010.
Must either fully comply with Annex I of the Load Lines Convention or the requirements applicable to ships engaged on International voyages prior to 21st July 1968. If a ship requires a reduction in freeboard it must comply with Annex I.	Must comply with the requirements of Annex I of the Load Lines 1966 Convention up to and including Resolution A.784(19), in relation to a ship of its description.	Must comply with the revised version of Annex I of the Load Lines Convention which was adopted by MSC.143(77).	Must comply with the revised version of Annex I of the Load Lines Convention which was adopted by MSC.143(77). Must also comply with Part A of the Intact Stability Code which was adopted by MSC.270(85), as amended by Resolution MSC.444(99).

Schedule 3: IACS interpretations

The BMA accepts the series of Unified Interpretations (UIs) which have been developed by the International Association of Classification Societies (IACS) to help clarify the provisions of the Load Lines Convention. The UIs are available on the IACS website at: http://www.iacs.org.uk/publications/unified-interpretations/ui-ll/

Schedule 4: Interpretations required by the Load Lines Convention

Load Lines Annex I Reg	Summary of the Load Lines Annex I Regulations Please refer to the full text of Load Lines Convention for the full requirements.	BMA requirements
Annex B, Annex I Regulations for determining load lines **Chapter 1** General		
Reg 1	**Strength and intact stability of ships** (1) The Administration shall satisfy itself that the general structural strength of the ship is adequate for the draught corresponding to the freeboard assigned. (3)(a) Ships constructed before 1 July 2010 shall comply with an intact stability standard acceptable to the Administration. (b) Ships constructed on or after 1 July 2010 shall, as a minimum, comply with the requirements of part A of the 2008 IS Code.	(1) Determined by the Recognised Organisation in accordance with the SOLAS II-I requirements. (3)(a) The intact stability standard prior to 01 July 2010 was IMO Resolution A.749(18) "*Code on Intact Stability for All Types of Ships Covered by IMO Instruments*", as amended by resolution MSC.75(69). However, the standard applied is one acceptable to the Authority in accordance with regulation 6(a), and the referenced IMO instrument is not mandatory under the Convention.
Reg 2	**Application** (3) Ships designed to carry sail, whether as the sole means of propulsion or as a supplementary means, and tugs, shall be assigned freeboards in accordance with the provisions of regulations 1 to 40, inclusive. Additional freeboard may be required as determined by the Administration. (4) Ships of wood or of composite construction, or of other materials the use of which the Administration has approved, or ships whose constructional features are such as to render the application of the provisions of this Annex unreasonable or impracticable, shall be assigned freeboards as determined by the Administration.	(3) & (4) Determined by the Recognised Organisation at the design stage on a case-by-case basis to ensure an equivalent level of safety.

	(5) Regulations 10 to 26 inclusive shall apply to every ship to which a minimum freeboard is assigned. Relaxations from these requirements may be granted to a ship to which a greater than minimum freeboard is assigned, on condition that the Administration is satisfied with the safety conditions provided.	(5) Determined by the Recognised Organisation at the design stage, taking into account IACS UI LL.51 Rev 2 *Freeboards greater than minimum*.
Reg 3	**Lower deck as a freeboard deck** (9) At the option of the owner and subject to the approval of the Administration, a lower deck may be designated as the freeboard deck provided it is a complete and permanent deck continuous in a fore and aft direction at least between the machinery space and peak bulkheads and continuous athwartships.	(9) Determined by the Recognised Organisation at the design stage to ensure an equivalent level of safety. This should be clearly described on the Record of Conditions of Assignment International Load Lines Certificate.
Reg 8	This Regulation requires ships to be "permanently marked on the sides of the ships to the satisfaction of the Administration."	As per UI LL.4 Rev.1, "Permanently marked" is considered to include welding of the marks on the sides of the ship provided the usual precautions as to material, electrodes, etc. are observed.
Chapter II Conditions of Assignment of Freeboard		
Reg 10	(2) Information shall be provided to the master in a form that is approved by the Administration or a recognised organization. Stability information, and loading information also related to ship strength when required under paragraph (1), shall be carried on board at all times together with evidence that the information has been approved by the Administration.	(2) Guidance on the format of the stability information is stated in Schedule 8.
Reg 11	**Superstructure end bulkheads** 'bulkheads at exposed ends of enclosed superstructures shall be of an acceptable length of strength.'	Determined by the Recognised Organisation at the design stage on a case-by-case basis.
Reg 12	**Doors** (2) Unless otherwise permitted by the Administration, doors shall open outwards to provide additional security against the impact of the sea.	(2) Determined by the Recognised Organisation at the design stage on a case-by-case basis to ensure an equivalent level of safety, taking into account IACS UI LL.5.
Reg 13	**Position of hatchways, doorways and ventilators** For the purpose of these regulations, two positions of hatchways, doorways and ventilators are defined as follows: Position 1...	Further information on the definition of Position 1 & Position 2 is stated in MSC.1/Circ.1535.

Reg 14	**Cargo and other hatchways** (1) The construction and means for securing the weathertightness of cargo and other hatchways in position 1 and 2 shall be at least equivalent to the requirements of Reg 16, unless the application of reg 15 to such hatchways is granted by the Administration. (2) Coamings and hatchway covers to exposed hatchways on decks above the superstructure deck shall comply with the requirements of the Administration.	(1) & (2) Determined by the Recognised Organisation at the design stage on a case-by-case basis to ensure an equivalent level of safety.
Reg 14-1	**Hatchway coamings** (2) In the case of hatchways which comply with Reg 16(2) through (5) the height of these coamings may be reduced, or the coamings omitted entirely, on condition that the Administration is satisfied that the safety of the ship is not thereby impaired in any sea conditions	The BMA accepts a reduced coaming height or for the coaming to be omitted entirely, providing the following criteria has been met: 1. the safety of the ship will not be impaired in the worst sea and weather conditions likely to be encountered by the ship in service; 2. when any coaming is fitted it shall be of substantial construction; 3. hatchways comply in full with the constructional requirements of Regulation 16 of the Convention; 4. arrangements must always be maintained as indicated in approved drawings; and 5. operational procedures including procedures for opening hatches at sea are to be documented and included in the vessels SMS and subject to documented risk assessment.
Reg 15	**Hatchways closed by portable covers and secured weathertight by tarpaulins and battening devices** (7) The strength and stiffness of covers made of materials other than mild steel shall be equivalent to those of mild steel to the satisfaction of the Administration.	(7) Determined by the Recognised Organisation at the design stage on a case-by-case basis to ensure an equivalent level of safety.

	Hatchways closed by weathertight covers of steel or equivalent materials (1) All hatchways in position 1 & 2 shall be fitted with hatch covers of steel or other equivalent material. Except as provided in regulation 14(2), such covers shall be weathertight and fitted with gaskets and clamping devices. The means for securing and maintaining weathertightness shall be to the satisfaction of the Administration. (6) The means for securing and maintaining weathertightness by other means than gaskets and clamping shall be to the satisfaction of the Administration.	(1) & (6) are determined by the Recognised Organisation at the design stage, taking into account IACS UI LL.6 and IACS recommendation 14 Rev.2
Reg 17	**Machinery space openings** (4) Where due to ship size and arrangement this is not practicable, lesser heights for machinery space and emergency generator room ventilator coaming, fitted with weathertight closing appliances in accordance with regulation 19(4), may be permitted by the Administration in combination with other suitable arrangements to ensure an uninterrupted, adequate supply of ventilation to these spaces.	(4) Determined by the Recognised Organisation at the designed stage on a case-by-case basis to ensure an equivalent level of safety.
Reg 19	**Ventilators** (3) Ventilators in position 1 the coaming of which extend to more than 4.5m above the deck, and in position 2 the coamings of which extend to more than 2.3m above the deck, need not be fitted with closing arrangements unless specifically required by the Administration. (5) In exposed locations, the height of coamings may be increased to the satisfaction of the Administration.	(3) & (5) Determined by the Recognised Organisation at the design stage to ensure an equivalent level of safety.
Reg 20	**Air pipes** (2) Where these heights may interfere with the working of the ship, a lower height may be approved, provided that the Administration is satisfied that the closing arrangements and other circumstances justify a lower height.	(2) Determined by the Recognised Organisation at the design stage, taking into account MSC.1/Circ.1534 regarding air pipes.

Reg 21	**Cargo ports and other similar openings** (1) Cargo ports and other similar openings in the sides of ships below the freeboard deck shall be fitted with doors so designed as to ensure the same watertightness and structural integrity as the surrounding shell plating. Unless otherwise granted by the Administration, these openings shall open outwards. (2) Unless otherwise permitted by the Administration, the lower edge of openings referred to in paragraph (1) shall not be below a line drawn parallel to the freeboard deck at side, which is at its lowest point at least 230mm above the uppermost edge of the uppermost load line. (5) Arrangements for bow doors and their inner doors, side doors and stern doors and their sering shall be in compliance with the requirements of a Recognised Organisation, or with the applicable national standards of the Admin which provide an equivalent level of safety.	(1) Determined by the Recognised Organisation at the design stage, taking into account IACS interpretation LL.21. (2) Determined by the Recognised Organisation at the design stage, taking into account IACS interpretation LL.49 (5) Determined by the Recognised Organisation at the design stage, taking into account IACS UI SC220 Rev 1.
Reg 22	**Scuppers inlets and discharges** (6) All pipes to which this regulation refers shall be of steel or other equivalent material to the satisfaction of the Administration.	(6) Determined by the Recognised Organisation at the design stage on a case-by-case basis to ensure an equivalent level of safety.
Reg 23	**Sidescuttles, windows and skylights** (1) Sidescuttles and windows, together with their glasses, deadlights and storm covers, if fitted, shall be of an approved design and substantial construction.	(1) An approved design is BS ISO 1751:2012 Ships' side scuttles, or an equivalent national standard.
Reg 25	**Protection of the crew** (2) Guard rails or bulwarks shall be fitted around all exposed decks. The height of the bulwarks or guard rails shall be at least 1m from the deck provided that where this height would interfere with the normal operation of the ship, a lesser height may be approved. If the Administration is satisfied that adequate protection is provided.	(2) Determined by the Recognised Organisation at the design stage on a case-by-case basis to ensure an equivalent level of safety.

Chapter II Freeboards		
Reg 27	**Freeboards** (6) Type B ships Freeboards at intermediate lengths of ship shall be obtained by linear interpolation. Ships above 200m in length shall be dealt with by the Administration. (13)(f) Condition of equilibrium – the Administration is satisfied that the stability is sufficient during intermediate stages of flooding.	(6) Determined by the Recognised Organisation at the design stage on a case-by-case basis to ensure an equivalent level of safety.
Reg 28	**Freeboard tables** Freeboard Tables in Regulation 28 bear an accompanying note to the effect that "*Ships above 365 metres in length shall be dealt with by the Administration*."	Determined by the Recognised Organisation at the design stage on a case-by-case basis to ensure an equivalent level of safety.
Reg 39	**Minimum bow height and reserve buoyancy** (3) Ships which, to suit exceptional operational requirements, cannot meet the requirements of paragraphs (1) and (2) of this regulation may be given special consideration by the Administration.	(3) Determined by the Recognised Organisation at the design stage on a case-by-case basis to ensure an equivalent level of safety.
Chapter IV Special requirements for ships assigned timber freeboards		
Reg 44	**Stowage** (6) Timber deck cargo shall be effectively secured throughout its length by a lashing system acceptable to the Administration for the character of the timber carried. (9) Where the requirements prescribed in paragraph (8) are impracticable, alternative arrangements satisfactory to the Administration shall be used.	(6) The BMA applies the Timber Deck Cargo Code. The latest version is Resolution A.1048(27) Code of Safe Practice for ships carrying timber deck cargoes, 2011.

Schedule 5: List of Resolutions amending the Load Lines Convention

The Bahamas' Load Lines Regulations enact the International Convention on Load Lines, 1966 as modified by the 1988 protocol including the following Resolutions:

Assembly Resolutions (1966 Convention):

- Resolution A.972(24) – adopted on 1 December 2005
- Resolution A.1082(28) – adopted on 4 December 2013
- Resolution A.1083(28) – adopted on 4 December 2013

MSC Resolutions (1988 Protocol)

- Resolution MSC.143(77) – adopted on 5 June 2003
- Resolution MSC.172(79) – adopted on 9 December 2004
- Resolution MSC.223(82) – adopted on 8 December 2006
- Resolution MSC.270(85) – adopted on 4 December 2008
- Resolution MSC.329 (90) adopted on 24 May 2012, including (Corrigendum)
- Resolution MSC.345 (91) – adopted on 30 November 2012
- Resolution MSC.356 (92) – adopted on 21 June 2013
- Resolution MSC.375(93) – adopted on 22 May 2014
- Resolution MSC.444(99) – adopted on 24 May 2018
- Resolution MSC.491(104) – adopted on 08 October 2021

Schedule 6: Information on the stability of a ship

The information relating to the stability of a ship to be provided for the master shall include the particulars specified below.

1. The ship's name, IMO or official number, port of registry, gross and register tonnages, principal dimensions, displacement, deadweight and draught to the summer load line.

2. A profile view and, if necessary, plan views of the ship drawn to scale showing all compartments, tanks, storerooms and crew and passenger accommodation spaces, with their position relative to mid-ship.

3. (1) The capacity and the longitudinal and vertical centre of gravity of every compartment available for the carriage of cargo, fuel, stores, feed water, domestic or water ballast.
(2) In the case of a vehicle ferry, the vertical centre of gravity of compartments designated for the carriage of vehicles shall be based on the estimated centres of gravity of the vehicles and not on the volumetric centres of the compartments.

4. (1) The estimated total weight and the longitudinal and vertical centre of gravity of each such total weight of:
    (a) the passengers and their effects; and
    (b) the crew and their effects.
(2) In estimating such centres of gravity, passengers and crew shall be assumed to be distributed about the ship in the spaces they will normally occupy, including the highest decks to which either or both have access.

5. (1) The estimated weight and the disposition and centre of gravity of the maximum amount of deck cargo which the ship may reasonably be expected to carry on an exposed deck.
(2) In the case of deck cargo, the arrival condition shall include the weight of water likely to be absorbed by the cargo. (For timber deck cargo the weight of water absorbed shall be taken as 15% of the weight when loaded).

6. A diagram or scale showing:
    (a) the load line mark and load lines with particulars of the corresponding freeboards; and
    (b) the displacement, metric tons per centimetre immersion, and deadweight corresponding to a range of mean draughts extending between the waterline representing the deepest load line and the waterline of the ship in light condition.

7. (1) A diagram or tabular statement showing the hydrostatic particulars of the ship, including the heights of the transverse metacentre and the values of the moment to change trim one centimetre. These particulars shall be provided for a range of mean draughts extending at least between the waterline representing the deepest load line and the waterline of the ship in light condition.
(2) Where a tabular statement is used to comply with 7.1, the intervals between such draughts shall be sufficiently close to permit accurate interpolation.
(3) In the case of ships having raked keels, the same datum for the heights of centres of buoyancy and metacentres shall be used as for the centres of gravity referred to in paragraphs 3, 4 and 5.

8. The effect on stability of free surface in each tank in the ship in which liquids may be carried, including an example to show how the metacentric height is to be corrected.

9. (1) A diagram showing cross curves of stability.
(2) The diagram shall indicate the height of the assumed axis from which the righting levers are measured and the trim which has been assumed.
(3) In the case of ships having raked keels and where a datum other than the top of keel has been used, the position of the assumed axis shall be clearly defined.
(4) Subject to paragraph 9(5), only enclosed superstructures and efficient trunks shall be taken into account in deriving such curves.
(5) The following structures may be taken into account in deriving such curves if the Assigning Authority is satisfied that their location, integrity and means of closure will contribute to the ship's stability:
    (a) Superstructures located above the superstructure deck;
    (b) Deckhouses on or above the freeboard deck whether wholly or in part only;
    (c) Hatchway structures on or above the freeboard deck
(6) Subject to the approval of the Assigning Authority in the case of a ship carrying timber deck cargo, the volume of the timber deck cargo, or a part thereof, may be taken into account in deriving a supplementary curve of stability appropriate to the ship when carrying such cargo.
(7) An example shall be included to show how a curve of righting levers (GZ) may be obtained from the cross curves of stability.
(8) In the case of a vehicle ferry or a similar ship having bow doors, ship-side doors or stern doors and the buoyancy of a superstructure is taken into account in the calculation of stability information, and the cross curves of stability are based upon the assumption that such doors are secured weathertight, there shall be a specific warning that such doors must be secured weathertight before the ship proceeds to sea.

10. (1) The diagram and statements referred to in 9(2) shall be provided separately for each of the following conditions of the ship:

Light condition, If the ship has permanent ballast, such diagram and statements shall be provided for the ship in light condition both with and without such ballast;
Ballast condition, both on departure and on arrival. It is to be assumed that on arrival oil fuel, fresh water, consumable stores and the like are reduced to 10% of their capacity;
Condition on departure and on arrival, when loaded to the summer load line with cargo filling all spaces available for cargo. Cargo shall be taken to be homogeneous except where this is clearly inappropriate, for example, in cargo spaces which are intended to be used exclusively for the carriage of vehicles or of containers;
Service loaded conditions, both on departure and on arrival.
(2) A profile diagram of the ship drawn to a suitable small scale showing the disposition of all components of the deadweight, a statement showing the lightweight, the disposition and the total weights of all components of the deadweight, the displacement, the corresponding positions of the centre of gravity, the metacentre and also the metacentric height (GM) and a diagram showing the curve of righting levers (GZ). Where credit is given for the buoyancy of a timber deck cargo the curve of righting levers (GZ) must be drawn both with and without this credit.
(3) The metacentric height (GM) and the curve of righting levers (GZ) shall be corrected for liquid free surface.
(4) Where there is a significant amount of trim in any of the conditions referred to in sub-paragraph (1) the metacentric height and the curve of righting levers (GZ) may be required to be determined from the trimmed waterline.
(5) If in the view of the Assigning Authority the stability characteristics in either or both of the conditions referred to in 10(1)(c) are not satisfactory, such conditions shall be marked accordingly and an appropriate warning to the master shall be inserted.

11. A statement of instructions on appropriate procedures to maintain adequate stability in each case where special procedures are applied such as partial or complete filling of spaces designated for cargo, fuel, fresh water or other purposes.

12. The report on the inclining test and of the calculation derived from it to obtain information of the light condition of the ship.

Schedule 7: Displaying the Notification of Draughts

Regulation 24 of the Merchant Shipping (Load Lines) Regulations 2026 requires a notice to be posted in a conspicuous place on board the ship containing particulars relating to the depth to which the ship is loaded, except where records are kept in an approved electronic format. The Draught of Water and Freeboard Notice, FORM008/FORM009 (formerly Form FRE13), is shown on the next page and may be downloaded as follows:

FORM008 v1.0 Draught of Water and Freeboard Notice Main Page (formerly FRE13-1)
FORM009 v1.0 Draught of Water and Freeboard Notice Continuation (formerly FRE13-2)

Where records are kept electronically, the notice does not need to be displayed, provided that the particulars that would have been displayed on the notice are available on request to all persons on board.

The draught of water and freeboard shall also be included in the ship's Official Log Book prior to the ship departing to sea.

The Bahamas Maritime Authority

DRAUGHT OF WATER AND FREEBOARD NOTICE

Ship Name		Port of Registry	Nassau	Gross tonnage	

(1) Summer freeboard* ..... millimetres corresponding to a mean draught# of ..... millimetres
(2) Winter freeboard* ..... millimetres corresponding to a mean draught# of ..... millimetres
(3) Tropical freeboard* ..... millimetres corresponding to a mean draught# of ..... millimetres
(4) Winter North Atlantic freeboard* ..... millimetres corresponding to a mean draught# of ..... millimetres
(5) Allowance for fresh water for all freeboards other than timber freeboards* ..... millimetres.
(6) Timber Summer freeboard* ..... millimetres corresponding to a mean draught# of ..... millimetres
(7) Timber Winter freeboard* ..... millimetres corresponding to a mean draught# of ..... millimetres
(8) Timber Tropical freeboard* ..... millimetres corresponding to a mean draught# of ..... millimetres
(9) Timber Winter North Atlantic freeboard* ..... millimetres corresponding to a mean draught# of ..... millimetres
(10) Allowance for fresh water for timber freeboards* ..... millimetres.

* The above data of freeboards and allowance for fresh water are to be taken from the load line certificate currently in force in respect of the ship.

Paragraphs referring to freeboards which the certificate shows have not been assigned to the ship must be deleted.
The mean draught to be given above is the mean of the draught which would be shown on the scales of measurement on the stem and on the stern post of the ship if it were so loaded that the upper edge of the load line on each side of the ship appropriate to the particular freeboard were on the surface of the water.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Date	Place	ACTUAL DRAUGHT			MEAN FREEBOARD		SIGNATURE OF MASTER AND AN OFFICER	
		For'd	Aft	Mean	Actual	Corrected	Master	An Officer
					(Notes 1 & 2)	(Note 3)		

NOTES (1) The actual mean freeboard (column 6) is the mean of the freeboards on each side of the ship at the time when the ship is loaded and ready to leave.
(2) If the actual mean freeboard is less than the appropriate minimum salt water freeboard as shown on the load line certificate there must be entered in Column 7 the corrected freeboard arrived at after making any allowances for density of water, rubbish to be discharged overboard and fuel, water and stores to be consumed on any stretch of river or inland water, being allowances duly entered in the ship's official log book.
(3) If the actual mean freeboard is greater than the appropriate salt water freeboard, Column 7 need not be filled in.

This notice should be posted in some conspicuous place on board the ship, where it can be seen by all members of the crew, before the ship leaves any dock, wharf, harbour or other place for the purpose of proceeding to sea and is to be kept so posted until after the ship arrives at any other dock, wharf, harbour or place.
The date and time of recording the above particulars on each occasion must be entered in the Official Log Book.
This form should not be handed in with the Official Log Book and Agreement at the termination of the Agreement. It can be used until completed, when a further copy should be obtained.

FORM008 - Draught of Water and Freeboard Notice v1.0 (formerly Form FRE 13-1)

FORM008 Draught of Water and Freeboard Notice Main Page (formerly FRE13-1)

The Bahamas Maritime Authority

Page No. ____

DRAUGHT OF WATER AND FREEBOARD NOTICE

Ship Name		Port of Registry	Nassau	Gross tonnage	

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Date	Place	ACTUAL DRAUGHT			MEAN FREEBOARD		SIGNATURE OF MASTER AND AN OFFICER	
		Forward	Aft	Mean	Actual	Corrected	Master	An Officer
					(Notes 1 & 2)	(Note 3)		

NOTES (1) The actual mean freeboard (column 6) is the mean of the freeboards on each side of the ship at the time when the ship is loaded and ready to leave.
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The date and time of recording the above particulars on each occasion must be entered in the Official Log Book.
This form should not be handed in with the Official Log Book and Agreement at the termination of the Agreement. It can be used until completed, when a further copy should be obtained.

FORM009 - Draught of Water and Freeboard Notice Continuation v1.0 (Formerly FRE 13-2)

FORM009 Draught of Water and Freeboard Notice Continuation Page (formerly FRE-13-2)

Schedule 8: Load Lines requirements for non-Convention Bahamian ships

The Load Lines Convention only applies to larger ships (of either 24m or above or 150gt or above depending on the ship's keel laying date) on international voyages. However, in order to provide a regulatory regime for commercial vessels to which the Load Lines Convention does not apply, the Bahamas Regulations require these ships to comply with the Load lines Convention as if the Convention did apply to them. In order to apply the Convention practically, an exemption clause has been included in the Regulations, so a ship may be exempt from any or all of the requirements of the Convention under certain conditions.

A non-Convention Bahamian ship is a commercial vessel that is:

- Constructed on or after 21 July 1968 and
  - ii. under 24 metres in length on any voyage; or
  - iii. 24 metres or over on a domestic voyage.

OR

- Constructed before 21 July 1968, and
  - i. under 150 gross tonnage on any voyage; or
  - ii. 150 gross tonnage or over on a domestic voyage.

The following ships are excluded from the Regulations (see Regulation 3 for full definition);

- pleasure vessels (i.e. private yachts)
- fishing vessels,
- warships
- ships solely navigating the Great Lakes of North America and the River St. Lawrence, Caspian Sea; or Plate, Parana and Uruguay Rivers.

A non-Convention Bahamian ship must comply with the requirements of the Load Lines Convention and following a successful Load Lines survey, the ship will be issued with a Bahamas Load Lines Certificate or Bahamas Load Lines Exemption Certificate.

Bahamas Load Lines Exemption Certificate

The BMA may grant an exemption from any or all of the provisions of the Load Lines Convention to a non-Convention ship. If a Bahamas Load Line Exemption Certificate is issued the ship must comply with any conditions stated on the certificate.

An example of when a Bahamas Load Lines Exemption Certificate may be issued is when a commercial vessel of less than 24 metres, which intends to operate around the Bahamian coast, is unable to meet all of the conditions stated in the Convention due to her age and build. The

BMA may issue an exemption certificate on condition that the vessel only operates within a certain distance from shore in favourable weather conditions.

Prohibition on going to sea

A non-Convention Bahamian ship must not proceed to sea unless it has been surveyed, marked and provided with a Bahamas Load line Certificate or, where appropriate, a Bahamas Load Line Exemption Certificate.

Schedule 9: Foreign ships

Foreign ships visiting the Bahamas

A foreign ship in Bahamian waters shall comply with the requirements of the Load Lines Convention, as applicable to a ship of its description.

The requirements for foreign ships are stated in Part IV of the Merchant Shipping (Load Lines) Regulations 2026.

Inspection of a foreign ship

1. The Port State Control requirements are stated in Article 21 of the Load Lines Convention.

In summary:

2. the Port State Control inspection will be carried out by Officers appointed by the BMA and will be exercised as far as is reasonable and practical with a view to verifying that a valid certificate is on board. If there is a valid certificate on board, the control will be limited to the purpose of determining that:
   a) the ship is not loaded beyond the limits allowed by the certificate;
   b) the position of the load line of the ship corresponds with the certificate; and
   c) the ship has not been so materially altered in respect of the matters set out in Article 19(9)(a) or (b) (duration and validity of certificates) that the ship is manifestly unfit to proceed to sea without danger to human life.

3. If there is a valid International Load Line Exemption Certificate on board, such control shall be limited to the purpose of determining that any conditions stipulated in that certificate are complied with.

4. If control is exercised under sub-paragraph 1 c), it must only be exercised in so far as may be necessary to ensure that the ship shall not sail until it can proceed to sea without danger to the passengers or the crew.

5. For the purposes of paragraph 2, an appointed Officer may accept any certificate that the Officer considers to be equivalent to the International Load Line Certificate or an International Load line Exemption Certificate, if the flag State of the foreign ship is not a Party to the 1966 Convention.

Schedule 10: Deck line and load line marks

1. Marking.

(a) The deck line and the load line mark shall be marked by the owner on each side of the ship in accordance with the directions of the Assigning Authority.

2. Deck-line.

(a) The deck-line shall consist of a horizontal line 300 millimetres in length and 25 millimetres in width and shall be marked amidships on each side of the ship so as to indicate the position of the freeboard deck.

(b) Subject to paragraph (c), the deck-line shall be marked in such a position on the side of the ship that its upper edge passes through the point amidships where the continuation outwards of the upper surface of the freeboard deck, or of any sheathing of that deck, intersects the outer surface of the shell of the ship as shown in Figure 1.

(c) Where the design of the ship, or other circumstances, render it impracticable to mark the deck-line in accordance with paragraph (b), the Assigning Authority may direct that it be marked by reference to another fixed point as near as practicable to the position described in paragraph (b).

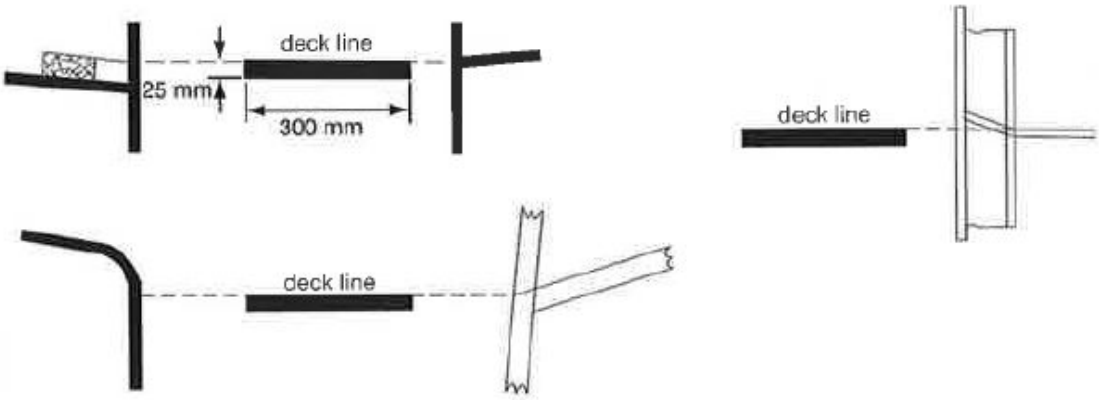


Figure 1: Deck line

3. Load line mark.

(a) The load line mark as shown in Figure 2 shall consist of a ring 300 millimetres in outside diameter and 25 millimetres wide, intersected by a horizontal line 450 millimetres long and 25 millimetres wide the upper edge of which passes through the centre of the ring.

(b) The centre of the ring shall be marked amidships vertically below the deck-line so that the distance from the centre of the ring to the upper edge of the deck-line is equal to the Summer freeboard assigned to the ship.

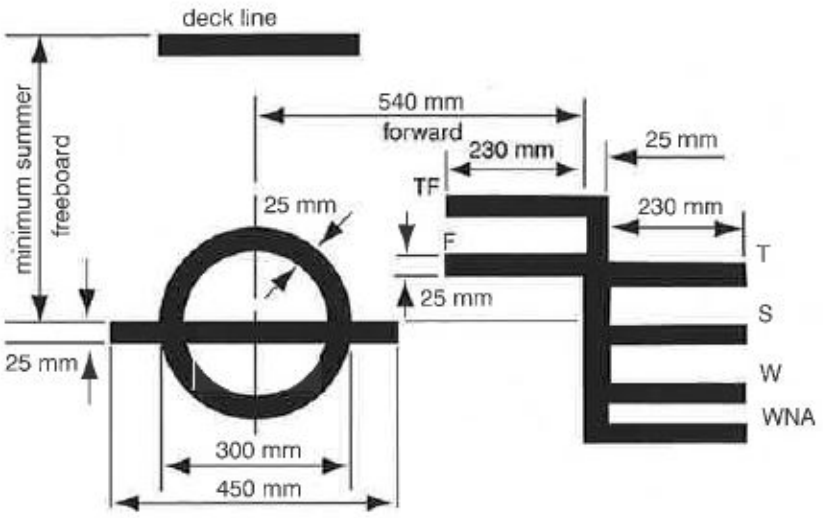


Figure 2: Load line mark and lines to be used with this mark

4. Load lines.

(a) Except as otherwise provided for in paragraph(c), the load lines shown in Figure 2 shall consist of horizontal lines of 230 millimetres in length and 25 millimetres in width extending forward or abaft of a vertical line 25 millimetres in width marked 540 millimetres forward of the centre of the ring of the load line mark and at right angles to that line. The individual load lines shall be as follows—

(i) the Summer load line, which shall extend forward of the said vertical line, and shall correspond horizontally with the line passing through the centre of the ring of the load line mark, and shall be marked S;

(ii) the Winter load line, which shall extend forward of the vertical line, and be marked W;

(iii) the Winter North Atlantic load line, which shall extend forward of the vertical line, and be marked WNA;

(iv) the Tropical load line, which shall extend forward of the vertical line, and be marked T;

(v) the Fresh Water load line, which shall extend abaft the vertical line, and be marked F; and

(vi) the Tropical Fresh Water load line, which shall extend abaft the vertical line and be marked TF.

(b) The maximum depth to which a ship may be loaded in relation to a load line referred to in paragraph (a) shall be the depth indicated by the upper edge of the appropriate load line.

(c) In the case of a sailing ship—

(i) the Summer load line shall consist of the line passing through the centre of the ring of the load line mark; and

(ii) the Winter North Atlantic load line and Fresh Water load line only shall be marked on the ship as shown in Figure 3.

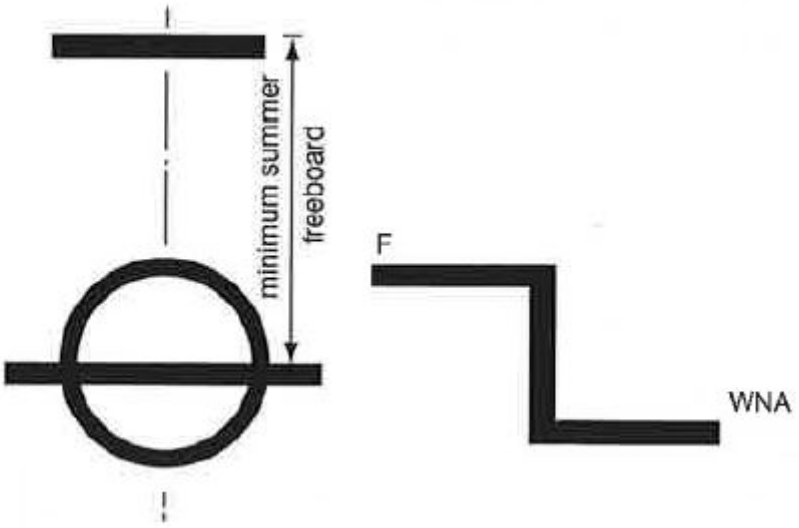


Figure 3: Load Line Mark and lines for sailing ships

5. Timber load lines.

(a) Timber load lines shall consist of horizontal lines of the dimensions specified in respect of such lines in paragraph 4(a), extending abaft or forward of a vertical line 25 millimetres in width and marked 540 millimetres abaft the centre of the ring of the load line mark and at right angles to that line as shown in Figure 4 and individual Timber load lines shall be as follows—

(i) the Summer Timber load line, which shall extend abaft the said vertical line and be marked LS;
(ii) the Winter Timber load line, which shall extend abaft the vertical line and be marked LW;
(iii) the Winter North Atlantic Timber load line, which shall extend abaft the vertical line and be marked LWNA;
(iv) the Tropical Timber load line, which shall extend abaft of the vertical line and be marked LT;
(v) the Fresh Water Timber load line, which shall extend forward of the vertical line and be marked LF; and
(vi) the Tropical Fresh Water Timber load line, which shall extend forward of the vertical line and be marked LTF.

(b) The maximum depth to which a ship may be loaded in relation to a Timber load line referred to in paragraph (a) shall be the depth indicated by the upper edge of the appropriate Timber load line.

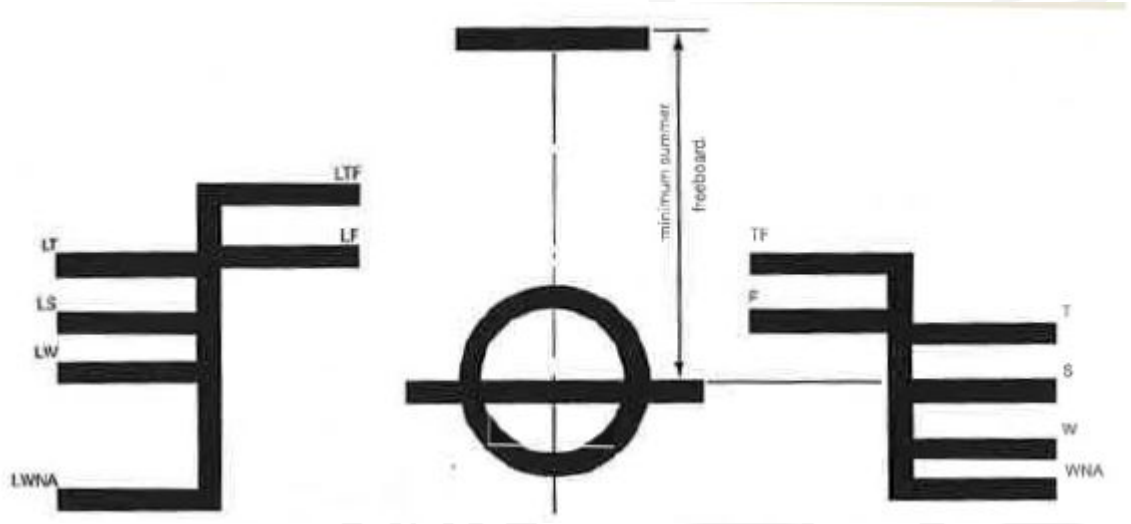


Figure 4: Timber load line mark and lines to be used with this mark

6. Position of load lines.

(a) Each load line shall be marked in such a position on each side of the ship that the distance measured vertically downwards from the upper edge of the deck-line to the upper edge of the load line is equal to the freeboard assigned to the ship which is appropriate to that load line.

7. Method of marking.

(a) The appropriate marks shall be marked in such a manner as to be plainly visible.

(b) If the sides of the ship are of metal the appropriate marks shall be cut in, centre punched or welded; if the sides of the ship are of wood the marks shall be cut into the planking to a depth of not less than 3 millimetres; if the sides are of other materials to which the foregoing methods of marking cannot effectively be applied the marks shall be permanently affixed by bonding or some other effective method.

(c) The appropriate marks shall be painted in white or yellow if the background is dark, and in black if the background is light.

Schedule 11: Form of Bahamas Load Line Certificate

FORM006 - Bahamas Load Line Certificate v1.0

	BAHAMAS LOAD LINE CERTIFICATE	Cert. No.:

This Certificate shall be supplemented by a Record of Construction and Equipment

Issued under the provisions of the MERCHANT SHIPPING (LOAD LINES) REGULATIONS, 2026, under the authority of the Government of

THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE BAHAMAS

by The Bahamas Maritime Authority

PARTICULARS OF SHIP:

Name of Ship	Distinctive Number or Letters	Port of Registry	Length (L) as defined in Article 2(8)(m)	IMO Number
		NASSAU		

Freeboard assigned as A new ship / An existing ship *

Type of ship Type A

Freeboard from deck line [1]		Load line [1]
Tropical	Mm (T)	mm above
Summer	Mm (S)	Upper edge of line through centre of
Winter	Mm (W)	mm below (S)
Winter North Atlantic	Mm (WNA)	mm below (S)
Timber tropical	Mm (LT)	mm above
Timber summer	Mm (LS)	mm above
Timber winter	Mm (LW)	mm below
Timber winter North Atlantic	Mm (LWNA)	mm below

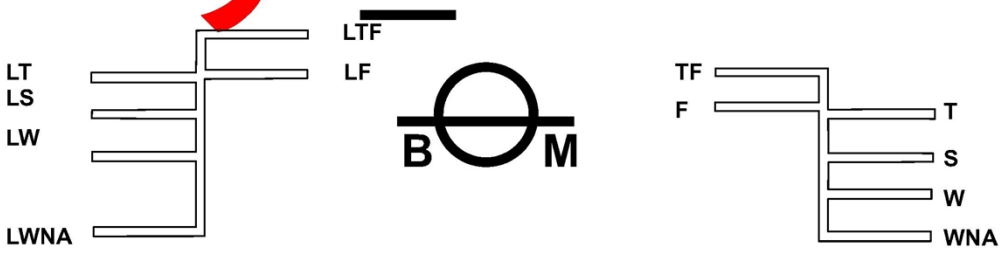
Freeboards and load lines which are not applicable need not be entered on the certificate. Subdivision load lines may be entered on the certificate on a voluntary basis.

Allowance for fresh water for all freeboards other than timber mm

Allowance for fresh water for timber freeboards mm

The upper edge of the deck line from which these freeboards are measured is mm

below the top of steel upper deck at/continued to* side.



*Delete as appropriate

[1] *Freeboards and load lines which are not applicable need not be entered on the certificate. Subdivision load lines may be entered on the certificate on a voluntary basis.*

* Insert the date of expiry as specified by the Administration in accordance with regulation 9 of Annex VI of the Convention. The day and the month of this date correspond to the anniversary date as defined in regulation 2.3 OF Annex VI of the Convention, unless amended in accordance with regulation 9.8 of Annex VI of the Convention.

Revision History

Version	Description of Revision
1.0	First Issue