
Security Training, Instruction and Certification

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

Replaces BMA Information Bulletin No.118

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watch-keeping for Seafarers, 1978, as amended (STCW) and the associated Code (STCW Code) require persons onboard ships to which the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code (ISPS Code) apply to have appropriate security training or instructions.
- 1.2. This Marine Notice outlines the training, instruction and certification requirements for persons serving on Bahamas-registered ships in accordance with STCW Chapter VI/5 and VI/6 and Regulation 19 of the Bahamas Merchant Shipping (Training, Certification and Watchkeeping) Regulations, 2026.
- 1.3. The Marine Notice should be read in conjunction with BMA Marine Notices. 012, 013, 019, 020, 028, and any other BMA Marine Notices and Information Notices relating to training and certification of seafarers.

2. Application

- 2.1. This Marine Notice applies to:
 - i. All Bahamian vessels to which the ISPS Code is applicable or is being voluntarily applied.
 - ii. All persons serving or intending to serve on Bahamian ships to which the ISPS Code is applicable or is being voluntarily applied in a capacity for which security training or instruction is required in accordance with STCW.
 - iii. Companies employing, recruiting or selecting the seafarers noted above for service on board Bahamian ships to which the ISPS Code is applicable or is being voluntarily applied.
- 2.2. For the purpose of this Marine Notice, the following definitions apply:

- i. **Company** is the owner of the ship or any other organization or person such as the manager, or the bareboat charterer, who has assumed the responsibility for operation of the ship from the shipowner and who, on assuming such responsibility, has agreed to take over all the duties and responsibilities for the assignment of seafarers for service on board Bahamian ships in accordance with the provisions of STCW Regulation I/14. This notification, as well as any changes to 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 meets the standards set out in STCW Regulations VI/5 and VI/6, and that has been approved by the Bahamas Maritime Authority (BMA) or by the competent authority of a State that is Party to the STCW Convention.
- iii. **Designated security duties** are duties or tasks that have been assigned to the person to perform security duties, including anti-piracy and anti-armed-robbery-related activities and which are either included in the muster list, emergency plan, vessel's Safety Management System (SMS), Ship Security Plan (SSP), job description or other shipboard documentation.
- iv. **BORIS** is the Bahamas Online Registration Information System.

3. General

- 3.1. In accordance with the STCW requirements, The Bahamas requires all persons serving onboard applicable Bahamian ships to have a valid Certificate of Proficiency that relates to the security training or instruction appropriate to their assigned shipboard duties
- 3.2. Security training or instruction shall satisfy the requirements specified in STCW Code Standard A-VI/5 or A-VI/6 as applicable.
- 3.3. Any person, except passengers, employed or engaged onboard shall have received security-related familiarization training satisfying the requirement of STCW Code A-VI/6.1 prior to being assigned their shipboard duties.
 - i. Security-related familiarization training or instruction shall be appropriate to the vessel on which the person is being employed.
 - ii. Security-related familiarization training or instruction shall be carried out by the Ship Security Officer (SSO) or another equally qualified person. The Company should 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 that the trainer's knowledge is kept up to date.
 - iii. Security-related familiarization training or instruction shall be documented in the vessel's SMS, and should include a record of the persons who have undergone training and the dates of the training/instruction.

- 3.4. For seafarers serving on Bahamian-registered vessels, the required training must be approved either by the BMA or by the maritime administration of a State that is a Party to the STCW Convention. :
- i. **Proficiency in security awareness:** This training must be undertaken by all seafarers without designated security duties. The training shall satisfy the requirements of paragraph 4 of section A-VI/6 of the STCW Code.
 - ii. **Proficiency in designated security duties:** This training must be undertaken by the seafarers who have designated security duties, including anti-piracy and anti-armed robbery-related activities. The training shall satisfy the requirements of paragraphs 6 to 8 of section A-VI/6 of the STCW Code
 - iii. **Proficiency as SSO:** This training must be undertaken by the seafarers designated as SSO. The training shall satisfy the requirements of section A-VI/5 of the STCW Code.
- 3.5. Guidance on the BMA approval process is provided in BMA Marine Notice 012, and the current list of BMA-approved Organisations/Institutions is available on the BMA website (<https://www.bahamasmaritime.com/services/seafarers-manning/>).
- 3.6. The BMA may also accept training that has been approved by an Administration or an Organisation/Institution authorised by the Administration of a country that is party to STCW This acceptance does not apply to security-related familiarization training.
- 3.7. Training for proficiency in security awareness or proficiency in designated security duties, as applicable, is required to be undertaken by the seafarers at least once. There is no need for refresher or revalidation if the concerned seafarer satisfies the security-related familiarization requirements of STCW Regulation VI/6 and has participated in the drills and exercises required by the ISPS Code.
- 3.8. The process to apply for a Bahamas Certificate of Proficiency is specified in Section 7 of this Marine Notice.
- 3.9. There is no requirement for a Bahamas Flag State Endorsement (FSE) in respect of security-related familiarization, security awareness training, security training for seafarers with designated security duties, or Ship Security Officer (SSO) training. However, upon the request of the Company, the BMA may issue a Bahamas FSE to a seafarer, provided that the national Certificate of Proficiency (CoP) has been issued by the Administration of a State that is Party to the STCW Convention and with which the BMA has an existing bilateral agreement.
- 3.10. 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.

- 3.11. The Company shall:
- i. undertake an assessment of onboard duties in order to determine the content of security-related familiarization and security training or 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.
- 3.12. The Master, who is deemed to be the person with overall responsibility of the ship, shall ensure that each person has the appropriate security training/instruction and certification, and security-related familiarization prior to being assigned shipboard duties.
- 3.13. The seafarer shall ensure they have a valid medical certificate and valid training documents at all times.

4. Requirements for training and certification for Ship Security Officers (SSO)

- 4.1. Any person designated as a Ship Security Officer (SSO) shall hold a valid Certificate of Proficiency (CoP) attesting to competence in accordance with STCW Code Regulation A-VI/5.
- 4.2. The mandatory minimum requirements for the issue of a certificate of proficiency for SSO are that the person:
- i. has approved seagoing service of not less than 12 months or appropriate seagoing service and knowledge of ship operations; AND
 - ii. meets the standard of competence for certification of proficiency as SSO, set out in STCW Code A-VI/5, paragraphs 1 to 4.
- 4.3. If applying for a Bahamas SSO CoP, appropriate seagoing service and knowledge of ship operations are deemed to be not less than performing designated security duties for a period of 12 months in total during the preceding five years or 3 months in total during the preceding 6 months immediately prior to the application being submitted.
- 4.4. An SSO shall have adequate knowledge of the English language to correctly interpret and communicate messages relevant to ship or port facility security.

- 4.5. A person trained and certificated as an SSO need not complete separate designated security duties or security-awareness training.
- 4.6. Refreshment or revalidation of this training is not required if the seafarer or the shipboard personnel concerned served onboard an ISPS applicable ship as SSO or participated in ISPS drills and exercises within the last 5 years. .

5. Requirements For Training And Certification For Seafarers With Designated Security Duties

- 5.1. Any person with designated security duties shall have a valid Certificate of Proficiency attesting to competence under STCW Code A-VI/6 paragraphs 6 to 8.
- 5.2. Designated security duties shall be deemed to be onboard tasks, activities and responsibilities as specified in the Ship Security Plan (SSP).
- 5.3. Where training in designated security duties is included (there must be a specific reference to STCW VI/6.4) in the qualification of a person (Certificate of Competency), a separate CoP need not be issued.
- 5.4. A person trained and certificated in designated security duties need not complete separate security-awareness training.

6. Requirements for security-awareness training or instruction and certification

- 6.1. Any seafarer employed or engaged in any capacity on board a ship on the business of that ship, and forming part of the ship's complement without designated security duties, shall hold a valid Certificate of Proficiency (CoP) attesting to competence in accordance with STCW Code A-VI/6, paragraph 4. For the purposes of this requirement, the BMA considers that any person with assigned shipboard duties is deemed to form part of the ship's complement.
- 6.2. Where training in designated security duties is included (there must be a specific reference to STCW VI/6.1) in the qualification of a person (Certificate of Competency), a separate CoP need not be issued.

7. Application Process For Issuance Of A Bahamas Certificate Of Proficiency (CoP) Or A Bahamas Flag State Endorsement

- 7.1. A Bahamas Flag State Endorsement (FSE) is not required for any training or instruction carried out under STCW Chapter VI/5 or VI/6.

- 7.2. Notwithstanding 7.1, any person who holds a Certificate of Proficiency (CoP) issued by an administration with which The Bahamas has a STCW recognition agreement for:
- i. SSO, or
 - ii. security-awareness training/instruction, or
 - iii. seafarer with designated security duties,
- may apply for a Bahamas FSE of that document.
- 7.3. Notwithstanding 7.1, any person who does not hold a security CoP but otherwise satisfies the security requirements of the relevant STCW Code may also apply for a Bahamas CoP.
- 7.4. Applications must be submitted (via BORIS) by the Owner or Company appointed by the owners of the ship, with the following:
- i. valid medical certificate (see BMA Marine Notice 028)
 - ii. 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
 - iii. 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
 - iv. applicable fee (see Marine Notice 50).
- 7.5. Applications shall be submitted in a timely manner to ensure there are no delays to the vessel due to missing documentation.
- 7.6. Failure to follow any of these guidelines may result in an application either being delayed or possibly rejected.
- 7.7. Once the application is received, complete with ALL required supporting documentation, it should be processed, and the CoP issued within three (3) months, from the receipt of the application.
- 7.8. If the CoP is not received within two (2) months from receipt of the application, the Company should contact the Seafarers and Manning Department. This will enable the Company and the BMA to address any identified problems.
- 7.9. If a Company requires documents to be processed within two (2) business days of receipt of application, the "Fast Track" option should be selected at the time of making the application. The provision of this "Fast Track" service is subject to an additional fee.

- 7.10. Correspondence relating to applications will be sent to the Company representative or individual seafarer as documented in BORIS and/or listed on the application form. All parties are encouraged to provide a general email address in order to avoid any delays in the application process.
- 7.11. The BMA should immediately be notified of any CoP that is reported as being lost or destroyed. The notification should include the following information:
- i. Name of Seafarer
 - ii. Date of Birth
 - iii. Nationality
 - iv. Affected Bahamas CoP Number (if known)
 - v. Request for Duplicate Certificate (if applicable)
- 7.12. Requests for a duplicate certificate should be made via BORIS and are subject to receiving the information required in 7.11 above, a copy of a valid medical certificate and the applicable fee (see Marine Notice 50).
- 7.13. If the lost CoP is subsequently found and a duplicate has been issued, the Company or the individual seafarer shall retain the duplicate Certificate and return the original CoP to the BMA.
- 7.14. Requests for amendment should be submitted to the BMA immediately upon receipt of the CRA or Acknowledgement Letter. Documents requiring amendment after issuance of the e-certificate may, at the discretion of the BMA, be subject to a fee.

8. Fees and refunds

- 8.1. The fees for a Bahamas CoP are the same as for any other BMA Certificate or Endorsement. Please refer to see Marine Notice 50.
- 8.2. The fees for the provision of the "fast track" service specified above are indicated in see Marine Notice 50.
- 8.3. Where a document, such as a CoP or CRA, has been issued, a refund may not be offered.

9. Queries

- 9.1. Any queries on this Notice may be submitted to stcw@bahamasmaritime.com or any BMA office.

