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## **INFORMATION BULLETIN No. 118**

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### **SECURITY TRAINING, INSTRUCTION AND CERTIFICATION**

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

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#### **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 Bulletin outlines the training, instruction and certification requirements for persons serving on Bahamian registered ships in accordance with STCW Chapter VI/5 and VI/6.
- 1.3 The Bulletin should be read in conjunction with BMA Information Bulletin nos. 70, 81, 86, 103, 121, 129, 130, and any other BMA Information Bulletins relating to training and certification of seafarers.

## 2 Application

2.1 This Bulletin 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 Bulletin the following definitions apply:

(i) *Company* is the entity that has accepted responsibility for the assignment of seafarers for service on board 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).

(ii) *Approved training or instruction* means training or instruction that satisfies the requirements specified in STCW Regulations VI/5 and VI/6 and has been approved by either The Bahamas or an STCW party with whom The Bahamas has a STCW recognition agreement. Refer to BMA website ([www.bahamasmaritime.com](http://www.bahamasmaritime.com)) for a list of Companies approved to undertake training and *BMA Information Bulletin 121* for the list of countries with whom The Bahamas has a STCW recognition agreement.

(iii) *Designated security duties* are duties or tasks that have been assigned to the person and which are either included in the muster list, emergency plan, vessel's Safety Management System (SMS), Ship Security Pan (SSP), job description or other shipboard documentation.

## 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 STW Code Standard A-VI/5 or A-VI/6 as applicable.
- 3.3.1 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 be assigned their shipboard duties.
- 3.3.2 Security-related familiarization training or instruction shall be appropriate to the vessel on which the person is being employed.
- 3.3.3 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.
- 3.3.4 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.
- 3.4.1 For seafarers on Bahamian ships, the following training is required to be "approved" by the BMA or by an Organisation/Institution whose training has been approved by the BMA:
- (i) *Proficiency in security awareness*: This training must be undertaken by all seafarers without designated security duties. The training shall satisfy the requirements 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 the 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.
- 3.4.2 Guidance on the BMA approval process is provided in *BMA Information Bulletin 86* and the current list of BMA approved Organisations/Institutions is available on the BMA website ([www.bahamasmaritime.com](http://www.bahamasmaritime.com)).

- 3.4.3. 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 and with whom The Bahamas has a STCW recognition agreement (*BMA Information Bulletin 121* provides a list of countries with whom The Bahamas has a STCW recognition agreement). This acceptance does not apply to security-related familiarization training.
- 3.5.1 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 exercise required by the ISPS Code.
- 3.5.2 The BMA is applying the transitional provisions outlined in STCW Code A-VI/6 paragraphs 5 and 9 until 01 January 2014. Accordingly the BMA will accept seafarers, who are serving onboard Bahamian ships prior to 01 January 2014 **and** who satisfy the requirements of STCW Code VI/6.9 and/or VI/6.5, being issued a Certificate of Proficiency by:
- .1 the BMA, or
  - .2 an Organisation/Institution approved by the BMA to undertake the training, or
  - .3 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.
- 3.5.3 The process for a Bahamas Certificate of Proficiency is specified in Section 7 of this Bulletin.
- 3.6 There is no requirement for a Bahamas Flag State Endorsement (FSE) for security-related familiarization, security awareness training or security training for seafarers with designated security duties or SSO training but if requested by the Company, the BMA may issue a Bahamas FSE to a seafarer.
- 3.6 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.

- 3.7 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.
- 3.8 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.
- 3.9 The seafarer shall ensure that he/she has 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 SSO shall have a valid Certificate of Proficiency (CoP) attesting the competence under the STCW Code 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 is 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 On completion of training, an SSO should 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 AND participated in ISPS drills and exercise within the last 5 years. The BMA will accept a letter from the Company or Master confirming that this criteria has been satisfied.

## **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 the 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 onboard a ship on the business of that ship as a part of the ship's complement without designated security duties shall have a valid Certificate of Proficiency attesting the competence under the STCW Code A-VI/6 paragraph 4. The BMA considers that for the purpose of this requirement, any *person with assigned shipboard duties* is deemed to be a 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.

7.2.1 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:

- SSO, or
- security-awareness training/instruction, or
- seafarer with designated security duties;

may apply for a Bahamas FSE of that document.

7.2.2. Notwithstanding 7.1, any person who does not hold a security CoP but otherwise satisfies the security training or transitional requirements of relevant STCW Code may also apply for a Bahamas CoP.

7.3 Applications must be submitted by the Owner or Company appointed by the owners of the ship with the following:

- valid medical certificate(see *BMA Information Bulletin no. 103*)
- 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). For applications relating to the transitional period, the BMA may accept a letter from the Company that clearly specifies which aspect of the transitional arrangement the seafarer satisfies. AND
- applicable fee (see *BMA Information Bulletin no. 81*).

- 7.4 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 are contained in BMA Information Bulletin no 137 but all parties should note that the criteria for access to the system is:
- (i) Agreeing 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) Details of the delivery address of the seafarers documentation, if different than (i) and (iii) above.
- 7.5 Applications should 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, with ALL supporting documentation, it should be processed and the CoP issued within two (2) months, from the receipt of application.
- 7.8 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.
- 7.9 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.
- 7.10 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.



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:

- Name of seafarer
- Date of Birth
- Nationality
- Affected Bahamas CoP number, if known
- Request for duplicate certificate, if applicable

7.12 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*).

7.13 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.

7.14 The BMA continues to review measures to reduce the loss of documents in transit.

7.15 Where documents require amendments, a fee may be charged at the discretion of the BMA.

## **8 Fees and Refunds**

8.1 The fees for a Bahamas CoP are the same as for other BMA Certificates or Endorsements. Please refer to *BMA Information Bulletin no. 81*.

8.2 The "fast track" service specified in 7.9 will be charged as a professional fee. Please refer to *BMA Information Bulletin no. 81*.

8.3 For applications where the CoP document has been issued, a refund may not be offered.

8.4 If no CoP is issued, then the BMA will charge the bank charges (\$25) plus an administrative charge of 20% of the document fees.

## **9 Enquiries**

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

## **10 Revision History**

Rev 3 (30 September 2013) – Full revision