



The Bahamas Maritime Authority

BMA INFORMATION BULLETIN No. 118

CERTIFICATE OF PROFICIENCY FOR SHIP SECURITY OFFICERS

Guidance and Instructions for Ship-owners, Managers, Masters, Bahamas Recognised Organisations and Bahamas Approved Nautical Inspectors

Note: This Bulletin is to be read in conjunction with BMA Information Bulletin Nos. 70, 81, 86, 103, 115, 121, 124 and IMO Resolutions MSC.203 (81) and MSC.209 (81)

1. Introduction

Chapter VI of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers 1978 (STCW) has been amended effective 01st January 2008 with a new Regulation VI/5 requiring all persons designated as Ship Security Officer (SSO) to be issued with a certificate of proficiency.

2. Requirements for issuing a certificate of proficiency for ship security officers (SSO)

2.1 The mandatory minimum requirements for the issue of a certificate of proficiency for SSO are that the candidate:

- .1 has approved seagoing service of not less than 12 months or appropriate seagoing service and knowledge of ship operations;
AND
- .2 meets the standard of competence for certification of proficiency as SSO, set out in section A-VI/5, paragraphs 1 to 4 of the STCW Code.

2.2 Appropriate seagoing service and knowledge of ship operations will be determined by the BMA but should not be less than performing security functions 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.

- 2.3 The Company shall ensure that any person designated as a SSO onboard a Bahamas registered ship has been issued with a certificate of proficiency attesting to competence under the STCW Code A-VI/5.
- 2.4 For the purpose of this Bulletin, the Company is the entity who has accepted responsibility for the assignment of seafarers for service onboard Bahamian registered ships in accordance with the provisions of STCW Regulation I/14.
- 2.5 The Registered Owner of Manager Company (in accordance with the ISM Code) shall report the full name and details of such entity (e.g. Manning agents) to the Seafarers and Manning departments. This notification, as well as any changes of the entity, shall be made either 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/Manager).

3. Issuance of a certificate of proficiency

- 3.1 There is **no requirement for a Flag State Endorsement to be issued with respect to the an SSO Certificate of Proficiency** and accordingly, seafarers should note that for service onboard Bahamian registered vessels, the BMA will accept any certificate of proficiency issued by either:
- .1 the Administration of a country which is party to STCW and which The Bahamas has an Agreement of Recognition, **OR**
 - .2 an Organisation/Institution approved by an Administration which is party to STCW and which The Bahamas has an Agreement of Recognition, **OR**
 - .3 an Organisation/Institution approved by the BMA to issue the certificate.

- 3.2.1 Any person designated as SSO who does not have a certification issued by the entities listed in Section 3.1 above may apply to the ***BMA for a certificate of proficiency***. The company should submit an application utilising the BMA's application form (see [BMA Information Bulletin no. 124](#)) and which is available for download from the download page of the BMA website to the BMA (email: stcw@bahamasmaritime.com) with the following information:
- valid medical certificate of fitness. This document must be issued by a medical practitioner approved by a country with whom the Bahamas has a STCW Recognition Agreement In urgent cases where the medical examination is to be carried out on board (e.g. on passenger ships which have a medical practitioner), a letter of intent from the company is acceptable,
 - (see [BMA Information Bulletin no. 103](#))
 - documentary evidence of 12 months seagoing service, **AND**
 - documentary evidence of satisfying the standards of competence specified in STCW Code Section A-VI/5, paragraphs 1 to 4 (For this purpose, any approved training shall make a clear reference to the STCW requirements), **AND**
 - applicable fee (see [BMA Information Bulletin no. 81](#)).
- 3.2.2 The completed application and supporting documentation shall be posted to:-

Application other than those from USA / Caribbean region

The Bahamas Maritime Authority,
Seafarers and Manning Department,
120 Old Board Street,
London, EC2N 1AR,
United Kingdom.

Applications from the USA / Caribbean region:-

The Bahamas Maritime Authority,
Third Floor
Manx Corporate Centre,
West Bay Street,
PO Box N-4679,
Nassau, New Providence,
Bahamas.

4. General

- 4.1 Failure to follow any of these guidelines may result in an application either being severely delayed or possibly rejected.
- 4.2 If the certificate is not received within one (1) month of the application, the Company should contact the Seafarers and Manning Department in the Office to which the application was submitted. This will enable the Company and the BMA to address any identified problems with the application.
- 4.3 If a Company requires documents to be processed within one (1) month of application, the BMA should be contacted and notified of the same. The provision of this “fast track” service will be subjected to an additional fee.
- 4.4 Correspondence relating to applications will be sent to the Companies as listed on the application form and all parties are encouraged to provide a generic email address in order to avoid any delays in the application process.
- 4.5.1 The BMA should immediately be notified of any SSO Certificate that are reported as being lost or destroyed. The notification should include the following information:
- Name of seafarer
 - Date of Birth
 - Nationality
 - Affected Bahamas SSO number, if known
 - Request for duplicate certificate, if applicable
- 4.5.2 A duplicate certificate will be issued subject to receiving the above information, copy of a valid Medical certificate and the applicable fee (See [BMA Information Bulletin no. 81](#)).
- 4.5.3 If the lost Certificate is subsequently found, the Company shall return this document to the BMA.
- 4.5.4 The BMA continues to monitor measures to reduce the loss of documents in transit
- 4.6 Enquiries relating to SSO applications should be made to Seafarers & Manning Department as follows:

London Office:-
Telephone: - +44 (0) 20 7562 1300
Fax: - +44 (0) 20 7614 0660
Email: - stcw@bahamasmaritime.com

OR

Nassau Office:-
Telephone +1- 242 356 5772
Fax: - +1- 242 356 5889
Email: nassau@bahamasmaritime.com

5. Fees

- 5.1 The fees for SSO certificates are the same as for other BMA Certificates or Endorsements. Please refer to [*BMA Information Bulletin No. 81.*](#)
- 5.2 The fast track service specified in 4.2 will be charged as a professional fee. Please refer to [*BMA Information Bulletin No. 81.*](#)