



A Guide to Registration

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Contents

Advantages of UK Ship Registration	- 3 -
Eligibility	- 4 -
Getting Started.....	- 4 -
Safe Manning	- 6 -
Certificates of Equivalent Competency.....	- 6 -
Medical Certificates	- 7 -
Maritime Security	- 7 -
Radio Communications	- 8 -
ISM Code	- 9 -
Seafarer Employment Agreements.....	- 9 -
Crew Accommodation	- 9 -
Maritime Labour Convention (MLC).....	- 10 -
Survey	- 10 -
Stability	- 10 -
Alternative Compliance Scheme (ACS).....	- 11 -
Civil Liability Certification (CLC).....	- 11 -
Fees.....	- 11 -
Contact Details.....	- 12 -

Advantages of UK Ship Registration

Customer Service

A Customer Account Manager (CAM) will be responsible for all administration functions and will guide you through the registration process. They will remain a point of contact for the whole time your ship is on the UK Ship Register, available 24/7, building a long-term relationship with you so your needs and expectations of a quality Flag are met.

A Customer Service Manager (CSM) is allocated to each company. They are a qualified surveyor and will be responsible for all your technical issues on all matters relating to UK Ship registration.

A Client Technical Manager (CTM) who is a qualified surveyor available 24/7 will ensure consistency of standards and customer service provided by our network of CSMs.

Access to technical assistance from Duty Surveyors 24/7, 365 days a year.

Assistance from qualified, experienced professionals and surveyors within maritime safety, maritime policy, environmental policy and seafarer services that can provide expert advice on your needs.

24-hour vessel and mortgage premium registration service provided all documentation is received.

We are a Flag of Quality

An international reputation for expert advice and guidance with a proactive leading role at the International Maritime Organization (IMO), EU and Quality Shipping Committees.

MCA Surveyors operational experience as Masters/Chief Engineers and Policy specialists help to provide relevant operational input to developing new regulations through M Notices and Guidance to owners, operators and seafarers.

Industry, through stakeholder engagement participate at various forums and specialist groups when considering new policy and regulations.

Our mortgage registration provides flexibility and security of finance.

Flexibility Matters

A pragmatic approach focusing on finding practical solutions.

Alternative Compliance Scheme (ACS) whereby the survey and certification process is streamlined by minimising duplication of effort with the Classification Societies: ACS allows the Classification Society to perform all statutory surveys required under SOLAS, MARPOL and Load Line Conventions (with the exception of ISM, MLC and ISPS audits) without a formal 'appointment' by the UK Ship Register. This allows the MCA to survey/audit the human element aspects of a ships operations.

Quality Assurance offering certification to ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 standards with audits being taken in harmonisation with International Safety Management Code. By harmonising the audits, it reduces the costs to ship-owners.

UK has minimal seafarer nationality restrictions giving companies flexibility in whom they employ provided they have a [Certification of Competency](#) issued by one of the 49 Administrations, that are accepted by the UK.

Flexible manning levels to reduce costs for vessel warm and cold lay-up.

Owner and operator incentives from UK Government providing more flexibility in costs such as Tonnage Tax and provision of SMaRT funding to increase the number of qualified seafarers in the UK maritime industry.

Reputation is Key

The UK Flag is one of the top performers on both the Paris and Tokyo MoU 'White Lists'. UK registered ships are not targeted by Port State Control regimes in the world's major trading areas.

Qualship 21 status for UK registered ships entering US ports. US Coastguard Inspection regime equivalent to the Paris MOU whereby because the UK has this status, UK registered ships visiting US ports are less likely to be targeted for inspection.

The Department for Transport's International Maritime Security Operations team works collaboratively with the MCA and stakeholders to help improve maritime security conditions for UK ships, seafarers on UK ships and British citizens at overseas ports.

UK and China Agreement for reduced port fees for UK registered shipping entering Chinese Ports.

Step by step guide to registration and certification of Merchant Ships joining Parts I and IV of the UK Ship Register

This guide is designed to help you through the registration process by explaining the procedures and documentation required for ships joining the UK Ship Register.

Eligibility

The following persons are qualified to be the owners of ships to be registered on Part 1 the Register:

- UK citizen
- British dependant territories citizen
- British overseas citizen
- company incorporated in one of the European Economic Area (EEA) countries
- citizen of a EU member state exercising your rights under articles 48 or 52 of the EU Treaty in the UK
- company incorporated in any British overseas possession which has its principal place of business in the UK or those possessions
- company in an European Economic Interest Grouping (EEIG)
- Commonwealth citizens
- citizens listed in [Schedule 6](#)
- non-United Kingdom nationals who are settled in the United Kingdom
- bodies corporate incorporated in a Commonwealth state
- bodies corporate incorporated in a country listed in [Schedule 6](#)

If none of the qualified owners are resident in the UK, a representative must be appointed who is either of the following:

- an individual resident in the UK
- a company incorporated in one of the EEA countries with a place of business in the UK

Getting Started

Your first step will be to complete a ship registration pro forma ([MSF 5547](#)), which provides us with the necessary information to check if your ship and owner are eligible for UK registration.

Following a successful check, you will then be assigned a Customer Account Manager (CAM), who will be your dedicated point of contact for administration and general policy matters, and will guide you through the transfer of your ship on to the Register. You will also be assigned a

Customer Service Manager (CSM) who will deal with the technical issues regarding the survey and inspection of your ship during the 'flag-in' process. The CAM and CSM will remain your dedicated points of contact whilst your ship remains on the UK Ship Register.

Required Documents for Part I Registration

The following documents are required for Part I registration:

- Application to Register – [MSF 4740 \(A\)](#)
- Declaration of Eligibility – [MSF 4727](#)
- Bill of Sale (for existing ships) – [MSF 4705](#)
- Copy of Certificate of Incorporation (if owner is a body corporate)
- Certificate of Survey for Tonnage & Measurement
- International Tonnage Certificate (ITC69) - (for vessels >500 GT)
- Builders Certificate (for new builds)
- Deletion certificate/transcript from the current register or a written undertaking to provide one within six weeks
- Copy of the ship's current Continuous Synopsis Record (for vessels >500 GT)
- Mortgage registration forms (if appropriate)

Required Documents for Part IV (Bareboat Charter) Registration

The following documents are required for Part IV registration:

- Application to Register a bareboat charter ship – [MSF 4738](#)
- Declaration of Eligibility for a bareboat charter ship – [MSF 4735](#)
- Copy of Certificate of Incorporation (if charterer is a body corporate)
- Copy of the charter party agreement
- Primary registration certificate
- Certificate of Survey for Tonnage & Measurement
- International Tonnage Certificate (ITC69)
- Copy of the ship's current Continuous Synopsis Record (for vessels >500 GT)

Once the documentation is received, a Carving and Marking Note will be issued to the attending surveyor. Once signed and returned, the Certificate of Registry can be issued.

Register a transfer of ownership

The following documents are required to register a transfer of ownership:

- Declaration of Eligibility – [MSF 4727](#)
- Bill of Sale – [MSF 4705](#)
- Copy of Certificate of Incorporation
- Continuous Synopsis Record (CSR) Amendment form (vessels > 500 GT) – [MSF 5623](#)
- Certificate of Registry

Renewal of registration

Part I registration lasts for 5 years. Three months before the expiry date, the Registry will issue a renewal notice to the registered owner which is to be completed and returned (with accompanying fee) to extend the registration for a further five years.

Closing of registration

The following documents are required to close a vessel's registration:

- Application to remove a British ship from the register – [MSF 4744](#)
- CSR amendment form (vessels >500 GT) – [MSF 5623](#)
- Certificate of Registry

A Transcript of Closed Registry will be sent to the owner on completion of the closure.

Please note that any documents used to support your application for Part I or IV if in a foreign language must be accompanied by a translation which must be certified as correct by a Public Notary.

Further to the registration process above, the following requirements need to be considered before the ship can operate on the UK Ship Register.

Safe Manning

An application for a Safe Manning Document is required for each ship over 500 GT joining the UK Ship Register. The application should be made at the time of applying for registration.

Form: [MSF 4227](#) – Application for a Safe Manning Document

More information:

- [MSN 1868 \(M\)](#) – UK Requirements for Safe Manning and Watchkeeping
- [MSN 1842 \(M\)](#) – Maritime Labour Convention 2006: Hours of Work and Entitlement to Leave Application of the Merchant Shipping (Hours of Work) Regulations 2002 and the Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour Convention) (Hours of Work) (Amendment) Regulations 2014

In addition to this application form, we also need a covering letter containing your telephone, fax and email contact information; details of any sister ships on the UK Ship Register; and confirmation of the date the Safe Manning Document is required. A General Arrangement plan is required unless a sister ship is already on the UK Ship Register.

To confirm manning levels are operationally viable and that working hours and rest periods meet regulations, we also require a typical seven-day voyage plan. Software will be provided for this purpose after the initial assessment of the application. Alternatively, monthly Hours of Rest records for the whole crew can be submitted using MSN 1842 (M).

Certificates of Equivalent Competency

In accordance with the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW), unless the officers on board a UK registered vessel hold a UK Certificate of Competency (CoC), they will require a Certificate of Equivalent Competency (CEC) issued by the MCA. CECs are available to officers who hold a CoC issued in accordance with the STCW '95 amendment from a country whose standards of competency and training are considered to be equivalent to those of the UK. A full list of countries can be found [here](#).

Before making an application, please make sure you are familiar with the following documents:

- [MSN 1867 \(M\)](#) – UK Requirements for the Recognition of non-UK Certification Leading to the Issue of a Certificate of Equivalent Competency (CEC)
- [MSF 4203](#) – Application for UK Certificate of Equivalent Competency

Medical Certificates

In order to serve on a merchant ship registered on the UK Ship Register the Master and crew must comply with the requirements of the Merchant Shipping Medical Examination Regulations.

These require seafarers working in any capacity on board a UK registered ship, to hold a valid UK seafarer medical certificate (ENG 1) issued by doctors approved by the UK Ship Register as referred to [MSN 1815](#).

Alternatively, certificates can be issued by approved countries whose standards are accepted as equivalent to the UK.

Related documents

- [MSN 1821\(M\)](#) – Approved Medical Practitioners List of countries whose medical certificates are accepted as equivalent to the UK
- [MSN 1815\(M\)](#) – Seafarer Medical Examinations System and Medical and Eyesight
- [MSN 1839 \(M\)](#) – Maritime Labour Convention, 2006: Medical Certification
- [MGN 219\(M\)](#) – Seafarer Medical Examinations: Guidelines for Maritime Employers and Manning Agencies
- [MSN 1745\(M+F\)](#) – Seafarer Vision test: Deck/Dual Career Personnel – Merchant Navy and Fishing Vessels

Where there is a particular need for certificates to be issued in areas where there is little or no access to approved doctors, companies may apply to UK Ship Register for approval of their own doctor to issue certificates for company employees only. Examination facilities must be shore-based as medical examinations are not permitted on board ship.

Maritime Security

You are required to arrange approval and verification of the Ship Security Plan (SSP) to meet the International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code and SOLAS Amendments 2002.

For each ship, the Company Security Officer must submit an SSP which meets the ISPS Code and SOLAS XI-2 for approval, together with the UK Ship Security Instructions relevant to the ship type, which is to be accompanied by the Ship Security Assessment.

Your CAM/CSM will provide contact details of the person who will approve the SSP.

Ship Security Alert System (SSAS)

The ship's equipment will need to be programmed and your application form [MSF 5620](#) (Company Declaration of Interim Compliance with ISPS Code) can be emailed to hq_maritimesecurity@mcga.gov.uk .

Training Requirements for Company and Ship Security Officers

Your Company Security Officers and Ship Security Officers are required to undergo UK Ship Register approved training. In multi-flag fleets, if less than 50% of your company's fleet in terms of ship numbers is UK registered other Administration approved training is accepted for the Company Security Officer. More information can be found [here](#).

Continuous Synopsis Record (CSR)

To advise changes to current CSR please complete [CSR Amendment Form 2](#) and submit to your CAM who will arrange issue of the next CSR in the sequence.

Radio Communications

The UK Radio Regulator is [Ofcom](http://www.ofcom.gov.uk) and as the administrator on behalf of a company you will need to complete and generate all radio licenses.

Radio Licence

You will need to apply for a Ship Radio Licence. Online applications are free of charge via www.ofcom.org.uk or applications by post using form [OF347](#) (for which there is a fee per licence). If you manage several companies you will need to register each company under its separate name.

For assistance please contact Ofcom Licensing Centre on:

Tel: +44 (0)20 7981 3040

Fax: +44 (0)20 7981 3235

Email: spectrum.licensing@ofcom.org.uk

MMSI Number & Call Sign

The MMSI number and call sign will change with the issue of a new radio licence. Arrange with your shore based maintainer for all GMDSS equipment to be reprogrammed with new MMSI numbers prior to survey.

Radio Survey

Classed cargo ship managers must arrange the radio survey and certification through their Classification Society. Further information can be found in MGN 392.

Long-Range Identification and Tracking (LRIT)

The Long-Range Identification and Tracking (LRIT) system provides for the global identification and tracking of ships. Under SOLAS Chapter V, Regulation 19-1, vessels >300 GT on international voyages are required to transmit LRIT information. For more information, please refer to the documents below:

- [MGN 441\(M+F\)](#) - Changes to MCA's 2002 SOLAS V Publication, arising out of Amendments to SOLAS Chapter V.
- [Long-Range Identification and Tracking Testers \(ATASPs\)](#)

Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) Registration

Please arrange for mandatory EPIRB registration through UK Ship Register, contact details:

Tel: +44(0) 1326 211 569

Fax: +44(0) 1326 319 260

Email: epirb@mcga.gov.uk

Please also arrange decommissioning/re-commissioning of all Satcom IDs with your airtime provider.

For COSPAS-SARSAT 406MHz: EPIRBS serial coding should be used.

For INMARSAT 1.6GHz: EPIRBS INMARSAT London should be contacted at:

Inmarsat Global Limited
99 City Road
London
EC1Y 1AX
United Kingdom
Tel: +44 (0)20 7728 1777
Fax: +44 (0)20 7728 1142
E-mail: customer_care@inmarsat.com

ISM Code

The Safety Management Certificate audits are conducted by the UK Ship Register and your ISM application should be made using form [MSF 5100](#) - Application for Survey and Inspection of Ships and Fishing Vessels.

Document of Compliance (DOC)

In multi-flag fleets, if the majority of your company's fleet is not UK registered, the MCA would not carry out a DOC Audit but would authorise the Flag state (White or Grey listed on Paris MOU List) or its Recognised Organisation (RO) approved by UK to issue a DOC on behalf of UK.

In the event the UK becomes the majority flag of your company's fleet in terms of ship numbers, the company's safety management system will require auditing, which will be conducted at the main premises from where the safety management system is managed, generally the location from which the Designated Person operates.

ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 14001:2015 Certification

To meet the growing demand for harmonised audits Maritime and Coastguard Agency Quality Assurance (MCAQA) is accredited by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) to certify customers' ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 systems. Transfer from other certification bodies will be considered.

Seafarer Employment Agreements

Seafarer Employment Agreements (SEAs) have replaced the previous requirement for 'collective' Crew Agreements, following the UK ratification of the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) in August 2013. We will not be producing blank SEAs for completion and instead recommended formats are available from the website (www.dft.gov.uk/mca – in the Working at Sea - Health and Safety section) as well as guidance on their completion. For further guidance, please follow the link:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/mlc-2006-titles-1-to-5-regulations-guidance-and-information>

Crew Accommodation

Any UK registered ship must comply with the United Kingdom Merchant Shipping (Crew Accommodation) Regulations 1997, Statutory Instrument 1997/1508, which implements ILO 92 and ILO 133 on crew accommodation.

If the ship joining the UK Ship Register is a new build, the requirements of the Crew Accommodation Regulations should be considered at the design stage. A ship transferring to the

UK Ship Register will require an inspection in accordance with the ILO Convention, which will include an inspection to ascertain it meets the required Crew Accommodation Regulations.

If there are overriding circumstances preventing either a new build or a ship transfer from complying with these requirements, it will be necessary for the ship owner/manager to apply for an exemption from the relevant provision of the regulations.

Maritime Labour Convention (MLC)

The [International Labour Organization \(ILO\)'s MLC, 2006](#) provides wide-ranging rights and protection at work for the world's seafarers.

The MLC:

- sets minimum global standards for seafarers' living and working conditions
- combines and updates more than 68 maritime-related international labour standards, produced over the last 80 years
- makes it easier for governments and ship owners to apply the system, and provide decent working conditions

The UK ratified (agreed to adopt) the MLC on 7 August 2013, with it coming into force on 7 August 2014.

[MGN 471](#) explains the UK's understanding of important terms used in the MLC.

Further guidance can be found on [gov.uk](#).

Survey

Each ship, either new-build or transferring from another Flag, must be surveyed before it can be registered on the UK Ship Register. These surveys can be undertaken by either MCA or MCA approved Class surveyors, depending on certain criteria. If the survey is delegated to Class please provide the name and contact details of the attending Class surveyor. On receipt UK Ship Register will arrange issue of the Instrument of Appointment. A transfer of flag survey can be arranged to suit the trading pattern of the ship to avoid any lost time.

If the survey is carried out by the MCA your survey application should be made using form [MSF 5100](#). If, on completion of survey, the surveyor is satisfied that your ship meets international standards and UK regulations, where relevant, of safety and pollution prevention, short-term certification can be issued immediately. Full term certification would then follow in due course.

Stability

Stability approval has been delegated to selected Classification Societies and Certifying Authorities for some ship types. Please contact the Stability Unit for guidance.

It is important that the stability submission to the Stability Unit is made at the earliest practicable stage in the new building/conversion/flag-in process. All stability work should be completed prior to inclining test such that it only remains for the final lightship to be inserted in place of the preliminary estimate to allow full approval.

Tel: +44 (0) 20 381 72721

Email: stability_unit@mcga.gov.uk

Alternative Compliance Scheme (ACS)

Under this voluntary scheme the survey and certification process is streamlined by minimising duplication of effort with the Classification Societies. When a ship is registered under the Alternative Compliance Scheme (ACS) it allows the Classification Society to perform all statutory surveys required under SOLAS, MARPOL and Load Line Conventions with the exception of ISM, ISPS and ILO 178, without a formal 'appointment' by the UK Ship Register.

Entry into the scheme is conditional upon Port State Control and Class criteria being met. To apply, please complete [MSF 4753](#) – Request to Participate in the Alternative Compliance Scheme for UK Registered Vessels. Further information can be found in [MGN 537 \(M\)](#) – Surveys: Alternative Compliance Scheme.

Civil Liability Certification (CLC)

UK ships and ships coming to or from the UK, or other state party, must have flag state certificates to prove that they have the relevant compulsory liability insurance certificates covering the following conventions:

- International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage (CLC), 1969
- Athens Convention relating to the Carriage of Passengers and their Luggage by Sea (PAL), 1974
- International Convention on Civil Liability for Bunker Oil Pollution Damage, 2001
- Nairobi International Convention on the Removal of Wrecks, 2007 – please

For further guidance, information, contact details and for application forms, please visit the following website:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/certificate-of-proof-of-civil-or-passenger-liability-insurance>

Fees

These fees are effective from November 2018.

Registration fee for Part I and Part IV	£153
Registration renewal fee (every 2-5 years dependant on charter)	£72
Transfer of ownership	£105
Change of name or port	£46
Change of measurement, tonnage or engine particulars	£46
Transcript of registry	£29
Transcript of closed registry	£46
Duplicate registry certificates	£32
Survey/surveyor travel fees*	£120 per hour
Stability approval fee	£120 per hour
Safe manning document	£199
Safe manning document for passenger vessels	£752
Safe manning document for a sister ship of a UK ship	£83

Certificate of Equivalent Competency	£109
Seafarer Medical Certificate (ENG1)	£95
Civil Liability (Bunker / Tanker Oil Pollution) Certificate	£31
Civil Liability (PAL / NWRC) Certificate	£31

*Travel fees only applicable for up to a maximum of 10 hours each way for overseas and 4 hours for UK.

Customer Account Manager (CAM) 24/7 support and services are free of charge.

Premium (24 hour) services are also available.

Please contact the UK Ship Register if you would like a detailed estimate of the total costs for registering your ship(s) on the UK Ship Register.

Contact Details

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For registration enquiries email: cam@mcga.gov.uk

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Out of Hours Duty Surveyor

+44 (0)7810 528504

