
Large Private Yachts (LPY)

Notice to yacht owners, managers, Masters, officers, crew, Recognised Organisations, Yacht Survey Organisations and Approved Nautical Inspectors

This Yacht Notice supersedes BMA Information Bulletin No.102

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This Yacht Notice (YN) is issued by The Bahamas Maritime Authority (BMA) to provide guidance on the technical standards, statutory and classification requirements for private (non-commercial) yachts of 24 metres (\approx 78 feet 8 inches) length (L)¹ and above ('Large Private Yachts' or 'LPY').
- 1.2. This Yacht Notice shall be read in conjunction with YN002.
- 1.3. Information on yachting in The Bahamas is provided in YN001.
- 1.4. Any queries may be referred to the BMA at yachts@bahamasmaritime.com.
- 1.5. LPYs are not permitted to carry more than 12 passengers.

2. Application

- 2.1. This Notice applies to all LPY.

3. Technical Standards

- 3.1. LPYs are not required to comply with the provisions of the Bahamas Large Charter Yacht Code (BLYC), but compliance is recommended. In particular, for the safety of the owner and guests the BMA recommends that LPYs comply at least with the standards of the BLYC in respect of lifesaving appliances and firefighting standards.
- 3.2. LPYs in restricted operation may comply with the provisions of the BLYC for Short Range Yachts.

¹ Length (L) or "Load Line length" means 96% of the total length on a waterline of a ship at 85% of the least moulded depth measured from the top of the keel, or the length from the fore-side of the stem to the axis of the rudder stock on that waterline, if that be greater. In ships designed with a rake of keel the waterline on which this is measured shall be parallel to the designed waterline.

- 3.3. Owners who require the flexibility to easily change their yacht's use between "private" and "charter" should maintain compliance with the provisions of YN006 *Large Charter Yachts (LCY)*, on a continuous year on year on basis in order to enable quick and easy transfer of the yacht's status.
- 3.4. Full compliance with the provisions of the BLYC for Short Range Yachts (or similar standards acceptable to the BMA) is mandatory for LPYs that operate for short periods in restricted charter status. Please refer to YN007 *Private Yacht Restricted Charter (PYRC)*.

4. Bahamas Large Charter Yacht Statement of Compliance

- 4.1. Voluntary compliance with the BLYC will entitle an LPY to be issued with a Bahamas Large Charter Yacht Statement of Compliance.
- 4.2. Compliance with the standards required by the BLYC will entitle yachts to also be issued with the certification required by the international conventions applicable to the vessel, upon satisfactory completion of the corresponding surveys and inspections.
- 4.3. The initial and renewal surveys shall be carried out by a Bahamas Recognised Organisation² (RO) or by a Bahamas Yacht Survey Organisation³ (YSO), however Bahamas YSOs are not authorised to undertake surveys on LPYs of 500 gross tonnage and above. On satisfactory completion of the surveys the surveyor will issue a short-term Statement of Compliance valid for 6 months.
- 4.4. The short-term Statement of Compliance and survey report shall be forwarded to the BMA by the surveyor. Upon satisfactory review and payment of the appropriate fee, the BMA will issue a full-term Statement of Compliance.
- 4.5. The full-term Statement of Compliance is valid for five years, subject to annual survey by an RO/YSO within the three-month period before or after the anniversary date.
- 4.6. If surveys are not carried out as required by the BLYC, the Statement of Compliance ceases to be valid.
- 4.7. Compliance with the stability provisions of the BLYC may be demonstrated by the approval of the BMA Yacht Stability Information Booklet by an RO/YSO.
- 4.8. Templates of the BMA Yacht Stability Information Booklet are available upon request from yachts@bahamasmaritime.com or on the Yachts page of the Bahamas website.

² A list of Bahamas RO is provided in [Marine Notice 002](#).

³ A list of Bahamas YSO is provided in [Yacht Notice 009](#).

5. Statutory Requirements

5.1. LPYs shall comply with applicable Bahamas regulations and international conventions as appropriate to their length, gross tonnage and number of persons carried on board.

5.2. The statutory requirements for surveys and certification are summarised below and a list of statutory documents to be carried is shown in Annex 1 to this YN.

5.3. Carving and Marking

5.3.1. All yachts shall be permanently and conspicuously marked with the name, port of registry, official number, net tonnage and draft marks in accordance with the Merchant Shipping Act. Please refer to paragraph 5.11 of YN002.

5.4. Tonnage

5.4.1. All LPYs shall be measured against the Tonnage Regulations currently in force by a Bahamas RO or YSO and issued with a Tonnage Certificate.

5.4.2. Tonnage is calculated and issued at construction or when a yacht is altered such that the tonnage is increased or decreased. The Tonnage Certificate should include the method of calculations used to determine the tonnage.

5.5. Ship Radio Licence

5.5.1. All yachts are required to hold a Bahamas Ship Radiocommunications Licence, which is issued by the BMA on behalf of the responsible communications regulatory body⁴.

5.5.2. A Ship Station Radio Licence Application [Form R108](#) is to be submitted at the time of registration and when any of the radio equipment is replaced, including Emergency position Indicating Radio Beacons (EPIRBs).

5.5.3. **EPIRBs must be registered** – see [BMA Marine Notice 45](#).

5.6. Load Line

5.6.1. As per Article 5(1) of the International Convention on Load Lines, 1966, as amended, LPYs are not required to comply with the Load Line Convention.

⁴ For The Bahamas this is the [Utilities Regulation & Competition Authority \(URCA\)](#)

5.7. ***Manning and Minimum Safe Manning Document***

- 5.7.1. There are no mandatory requirements for manning levels of LPYs, but the owner should ensure that the manning level is adequate for the yacht's proposed operation.
- 5.7.2. A Minimum Safe Manning Document (MSMD) is not required for LPYs; however, owners may voluntarily apply for a MSMD.
- 5.7.3. The MSMD is valid for 5 years and is subject to the fee indicated in [BMA Marine Notice 50](#). Further details including the application procedure are provided in [BMA Marine Notice 18](#)
- 5.7.4. Seafarers working on Bahamian yachts may apply for and be issued with Seaman's Record Books (SRBs), which are available on request. It should be noted however that a Bahamas SRB is NOT an identity document and is unsuitable for immigration purposes or as an authoritative identity document - such documents should be issued by the relevant agency in seafarer's home country. Please refer to [BMA Information Bulletin No. 107](#).

5.8. ***Maritime Labour Convention 2006 (MLC)***

- 5.8.1. MLC 2006 does not apply to yachts in non-commercial use. Please refer to [BMA Marine Notice 31](#)

5.9. ***Prevention of marine pollution (MARPOL Convention⁵)***

- 5.9.1. LPYs shall comply with the provisions of the MARPOL Convention as detailed below.
- 5.9.2. The required MARPOL Record Books shall always be readily available on board for inspection by surveyors and other duly authorised officials (such as Port State Control Officers) to demonstrate compliance with the Convention.
- 5.9.3. MARPOL Record Books are available to purchase from the BMA – please refer to [Marine Notice 60](#) Alternatively, electronic record keeping systems are accepted – please refer to [Marine Notice 10](#).
- 5.9.4. ***MARPOL Annex I (Oil Pollution)***
 - i. LPYs of 400 gross tonnage and above are required to:
 - (a) be surveyed and to hold an International Oil Pollution Prevention (IOPP) Certificate in compliance with MARPOL Annex I; and
 - (b) maintain on board an Oil Record Book Part I.

⁵ The International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973, as amended

5.9.5. *MARPOL Annex IV (Sewage)*

- i. LPYs certified to carry more than 15 persons, **OR** of 400 gross tonnage and above, are required to be surveyed and provided with an International Sewage Pollution Prevention (ISPP) Certificate.

5.9.6. *MARPOL Annex V (Garbage)*

- i. All LPYs shall comply with the provisions of MARPOL Annex V for the discharge of garbage into the sea.
- ii. All LPYs shall display placards which notify the crew and passengers of the discharge requirements of regulations 3, 4, 5 and 6 of MARPOL Annex V.
- iii. LPYs certified to carry 15 or more persons, **OR** of 100 gross tonnage and above, are required to carry a Garbage Management Plan in accordance with Regulation 10 of MARPOL Annex V.
- iv. LPYs certified to carry 15 or more persons engaged on voyages outside The Bahamas, **OR** of 400 gross tonnage and above, are required to maintain records in a Garbage Record Book Part I⁶ as described in Regulation 10 of MARPOL Annex V

5.9.7. *MARPOL Annex VI (Air Pollution)*

- i. All LPYs shall comply with the provisions of MARPOL Annex VI unless expressly provided otherwise.
- ii. More information on MARPOL Annex VI is provided in [BMA Marine Notice No. 61](#) and [BMA Marine Notice No. 62](#)
- iii. LPYs of 400 gross tonnage and above are required to:
 - be surveyed and to hold an International Air Pollution Prevention (IAPP) Certificate in compliance with MARPOL Annex VI; and
 - be surveyed and to hold an International Energy Efficiency Certificate (IEEC) in compliance with MARPOL Annex VI.
- iv. **Engine International Air Pollution Prevention (EIAPP) Certificate**
 - All diesel engines with an output of more than 130kW⁷, installed on LPYs on or after 01 January 2000, are to be certified in accordance with the IMO NO_x Technical Code and provided with an EIAPP Certificate and an approved Technical File.
 - A marine diesel engine installed on an LPY of 500 gross tonnage and above on or after 01 January 2021 shall comply with the Tier III NO_x requirements specified in Regulation 13 of MARPOL Annex VI. However, compliance with Tier III requirements is only required for LPY that intend to enter a NO_x Emission Control Area.

⁶ Available for purchase from the BMA – see [BMA Information Bulletin No.169](#)

⁷ Approximately 177 horsepower

5.10. ***International Anti-Fouling System Convention (AFS Convention)***

- 5.10.1. The AFS Convention applies to *all* vessel types operating in the marine environment, irrespective of tonnage, including every yacht.
- 5.10.2. LPYs of less than 400 gross tonnage are not required to have an International Anti-fouling System Certificate. However, the yacht's owner shall carry onboard evidence that the type of anti-fouling coating used is compatible with the AFS Convention.
- 5.10.3. LPYs of 400 gross tonnage and above engaged on international voyages shall be surveyed and hold an International Anti-Fouling System Certificate. A survey shall be carried out whenever the anti-fouling systems are changed or replaced and endorsed on the certificate.

5.11. ***Safety certificates***

- 5.11.1. LPYs are not required to be surveyed and hold safety certificates, unless operating as Private Yacht Restricted Charter, as described in paragraph 3.4.
- 5.11.2. Voluntary safety construction, safety equipment and navigation equipment compliance are as per BLYC or equivalent.
- 5.11.3. ***Long Range Identification and Tracking (LRIT)***
- i. LPYs are not required to be fitted with an LRIT system.
- 5.11.4. ***International Safety Management Code (ISM Code)***
- i. LPYs of 500 gross tonnage and above are not required to comply with the ISM Code but are encouraged to do so.
 - ii. LPYs of less than 500 gross tonnage are not required to comply with the ISM Code but are encouraged to comply with Section 24, Part A of the BLYC.
- 5.11.5. ***International Ship & Port Facility Security Code (ISPS Code)***
- i. LPYs are not required to comply with the ISPS Code but are required to be vigilant regarding both the security of their own yacht, to prevent it being used without authorisation, and the activities of other vessel in their vicinity, reporting any suspicious activity to the authorities.
 - ii. Advice for non-ISPS vessels is provided in IMO Circular [IMO MSC.1/Circ.1283](#).

- 5.11.6. *Continuous Synopsis Record (CSR)*
- i. LPYs are not required to comply Continuous Synopsis Record requirements.
- 5.12. ***Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, 1972, as amended (COLREG)***
- 5.12.1. Navigation lights and shapes shall comply with the applicable provisions of COLREG, including the following provisions:
- i. all navigation lights shall be provided with main and emergency power supply;
 - ii. all navigation lights required to be shown whilst underway shall be duplicated⁸; and
 - iii. approved LED Lights may be used providing they comply with paragraph 4.3 of MSC.253(83).
- 5.13. ***International Convention on Civil Liability for Bunker Oil Pollution Damage, 2001 (Bunker Convention)***
- 5.13.1. LPYs of 1,000 gross tonnage and above are required to maintain insurance or other financial security in accordance with the Bunker Convention and hold a Bunker CLC Certificate.
- 5.13.2. Please refer to [BMA Marine Notice No. 67](#)
- 5.14. ***Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments, 2004, as amended (BWM 2004);***
- 5.14.1. LPYs that use water for ballasting purposes are required to comply with the BWM Convention⁹.
- 5.14.2. Notwithstanding the generality of paragraph 5.14.1, LPYs of less than 50 metres length overall with a maximum ballast water capacity of eight cubic metres may comply with the IMO G3 guidelines. Overall length means the length of the hull excluding bowsprits, booms, bumpkins, pulpits, etc. Please refer to [MEPC.123\(53\) Guidelines for Ballast Water Management Equivalent Compliance \(G3\)](#).

⁸ See IMO Resolution [MSC.253\(83\) Recommendation on Performance Standards for Navigation Lights](#)

⁹ See BMA [Marine Notice No. 65](#)

5.15. Nairobi International Convention on the Removal of Wrecks, 2007

- 5.15.1. LPYs of 300 gross tonnage and above are required to carry an appropriate level of insurance covering liability for costs arising from the costs of wreck removal.
- 5.15.2. As evidence that adequate insurance cover is in place the owner or operator of the ship is required to carry a Wreck Removal Insurance Certificate to this effect issued by the BMA¹⁰.
- 5.15.3. The BMA will issue such a Wreck Removal Convention Certificate only where it is satisfied that the insurance cover provided is acceptable.

6. Classification Requirements.

- 6.1. LPYs are not required to be “in class” with a Bahamas RO, however it is recommended that LPYs intended to change between “private” and “charter” status or between “private” and “restricted charter” status are classed with a Bahamas RO.
- 6.2. Bahamas Recognised Organisations are authorised to examine plans, perform surveys and issue statutory certification on behalf of The Government of The Commonwealth of the Bahamas.

7. Bahamas Safety Inspection

- 7.1. For the safety of the owner and guests and to ensure the yacht is seaworthy, LPYs shall undergo a safety inspection by a Bahamas YSO or inspector at least once every 5 years, with effect from 01 April 2025.
- 7.2. All yachts have a safety inspection “anniversary date”. The anniversary date is usually three months after the date of provisional registration. The anniversary date is generally fixed for the duration of time that the yacht remains registered with The Bahamas.
- 7.3. A list of anniversary dates is available on the BMA website at:
<https://www.bahamasmaritime.com/services/inspections-surveys/vessel-anniversary-dates/>
- 7.4. Yachts that are already registered are required to undergo the safety inspection at any time between 01 April 2025 and 31 March 2030. The Anniversary Date will be fixed at 5 years from the date of the first inspection.

¹⁰ See [BMA Marine Notice No. 68](#)

- 7.5. The Company is responsible for arranging the inspection and should make arrangements for inspection directly with the Bahamas Approved Nautical Inspector (ANI) that is nearest to the port at which the ship is lying. Bahamas ANIs are listed on the BMA website at <https://www.bahamasmaritime.com/inspectors/>.
- 7.6. Cost of the Inspection is to ship manager/ owner's account and shall be settled directly with the attending inspection/survey Company.
- 7.7. Upon satisfactory completion of the safety inspection, a Certificate of Inspection will be issued. Please refer to paragraphs 9-14 of Marine Notice 91 for further information.
- 7.8. The BMA can provide a safety checklist for the master/skipper to carry out a self-assessment to ensure that the lifesaving and firefighting equipment is properly maintained and in good order between inspections.
- 8. Queries.**
- 8.1. Any queries on this Notice may be addressed to yachts@bahamasmaritime.com or any BMA office.

Annex 1 - List of statutory documents to be carried by a LPY

Gross Tonnage	Document	Issuing body
All	Certificate of Registry	BMA
	Form Y301 - Declaration of Non-commercial use	BMA & Owner
	Carving and Marking Inspection	BMA
	Bahamas Large Charter Yacht Statement of Compliance (Optional)	BMA
	Bahamas Safety Inspection Certificate or Bahamas Safety Check List	BMA/YSO Owner
	International Tonnage Certificate	RO/YSO/BMA
	Ship Radio Licence	BMA
	Engine International Air Pollution Prevention Certificate ($\geq 130\text{kW}$)	Engine Manufacturer
	International Ballast Water Management Certificate/Statement (if applicable)	RO/YSO/BMA
	International Sewage Pollution Prevention Certificate (for yachts carrying more than 15 persons or $\geq 400\text{GT}$)	RO/YSO/BMA
	Garbage Management Plan and Garbage Record Book Part I (Yachts carrying more than 15 persons)	Owner
	Certificate of Class (if applicable)	RO
	Minimum Safe Manning Document (optional)	BMA
	≥ 300	Wreck Removal Insurance Certificate
≥ 400	International Anti-fouling System Certificate	RO/YSO
≥ 500	ISM Safety Management Certificate (optional)	RO/YSO/BMA
≥ 1000	Bunker CLC (if applicable)	BMA
BMA – Bahamas Maritime Authority RO – Recognised Organisation (Classification Society) YSO – Yacht Survey Organisation		

