



The Bahamas Maritime Authority

BMA INFORMATION BULLETIN No. 122

PRACTICE, POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR LAY UP OF A BAHAMAS REGISTERED VESSEL

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

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1. This Bulletin is guidance and, where necessary, instructions to assist Owners and Managers in the process of laying up a vessel.
 2. No specific permission is required from this Authority although notification to the Inspections & Surveys and Registration Departments will enable the BMA to maintain proper records and be ready to respond in context to any query about the vessel. (tech@bahamasmaritime.com & reg@bahamasmaritime.com)

If no notification is made the BMA will assume that the vessel is trading normally and maintaining a full regime of certification, surveys and inspections including normal manning for such operations. Failure to notify the BMA and the relevant Recognised Organisation(s) and Recognised Security Organisation of a vessel entering lay-up, or to maintain a safe lay-up will be regarded as a serious ISM non-conformity and may jeopardise the registration of the vessel.

3. The owner or manager must advise the BMA of the proposed length of the lay up and the state of readiness of the vessel to resume trade. The owner or manager should take advice as necessary including that of the Recognised Organisation. The industry has several descriptions of lay up being "hot," "warm," "cold" or various other words. These are not defined and so the BMA will not accept them as formal or definitive descriptions.

4. Statutory Ship Certificates including ISM

GENERAL

- 4.1. Statutory certification is normally only needed when vessels are engaged on international voyages. Therefore, depending upon the proposed length of the lay up, and taking into account any requirements of the coastal state of the lay-up location, an owner should consider whether to maintain or suspend these Certificates.
- 4.2. Recognised Organisations have procedures for laying up vessels and, bearing in mind that one provision of Registration with this Administration is that vessels remain in Class, compliance with those Classification Society requirements will be adequate to maintain such.
- 4.3. If a vessel is laid up for a prolonged period this Administration may authorise suspension, or cancellation of statutory certificates, as long as this is compatible with the location and the requirements of the responsible coastal State. Companies should contact the BMA as soon as the decision to lay-up a vessel is made to agree on specific certification requirements.
- 4.4. ISM

If the care of a vessel during lay-up is handed over to an organisation which is not the ISM Company then, provided all requirements of the coastal state and the Recognised Organisation are met, and the BMA are notified of contact details of the organisation that holds responsibility for the safety of the vessel during lay up, the Bahamas will accept the suspension of the ISM certification of the vessel.

5. Manning

- 5.1. The Safe Manning Document does not apply to ships in lay up.
- 5.2. When a vessel is laid up, normal manning may be reduced appropriate to the status and operational requirements of the vessel. Such reduction should be considered in consultation with the Port or Coastal State Authority.
- 5.3. In some cases that Port or Coastal State Authority may wish to have the manning level in lay up approved by the BMA. The Manager should then advise the BMA Seafarers and Manning Department of the proposed level of safe manning: stcw@bahamasmaritime.com .
- 5.4. The BMA recommends that a suitably qualified person should remain in charge of the vessel in lay up for the proposed lay-up period and that the manning available should include sufficient numbers of trained persons to meet any emergency situation. In such circumstances, communication must be maintained with the local authorities so that further assistance may be immediately obtained when required. The following should be considered when assessing what manning is appropriate:
- the location of the vessel,
 - the equipment and systems remaining in operation, and
 - the method by which the vessel is kept in position (moorings, anchorage etc).

6. ISPS

The continued validity of the vessel's ISPS certification will be an important element in the reactivation of the vessel. The BMA strongly recommends that the ISSC be maintained, although specific procedures may need to be added to the Security System, depending upon the extent or "depth" of the lay up. In each case this will be managed and audited by the Recognised Security Organisation, which will correspond directly with the BMA wherever clarification is necessary. If the circumstances of paragraph 4.4 are in place the Owner must communicate with the Recognised Security Organisation to ensure that the Ship Security Plan covers that operation.

If the vessel is integrated into the port facility security system the records suspending and subsequently reactivation the ISSC should clearly reflect that in order to demonstrate continuity of Security.

7. LRIT

Normal procedures for **LRIT** will apply. If the LRIT equipment is deactivated or switched off, the BMA should be advised at lrit@bahamasmaritime.com in accordance with Section 9 of Bulletin No 111.

8. Bahamas Annual Inspections

Bulletin No 66 details the Bahamas Annual Inspection requirements. If the duration of lay up includes the window for the Bahamas Annual Inspection, the Anniversary Date may be suspended until the vessel is being prepared for reactivation. Owners or managers should submit full details to the Inspections and Surveys Department of the BMA at tech@bahamasmaritime.com .

Any failure to maintain the Annual Inspection requirements without prior agreement with the BMA will be regarded as a serious ISM non-conformity.

9. Re-Commissioning

This will be a matter for the Manager and the Recognised Organisation to consider. While re-commissioning the vessel the manning must be kept under review taking into account the reactivation of machinery and equipment and the associated hazards including potential fire risk. All previously cancelled, suspended or outdated certificates, audits and inspections will have to be remade and the manning restored to be compliant with the Safe Manning Document before the vessel sails from her port of lay up.