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Belize – Guidelines for the implementation of MLC 2022 amendments

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Notice to: Ship Owners/ Managers/ Operators / Auditors

The International Merchant Marine Registry of Belize (IMMARBE) has issued Merchant Marine Notice [MMN-24-011 Guidelines for the Implementation of MLC 2022 Amendments](#). These amendments took effect on 23 December 2024 and address a range of seafarer-related issues, including recruitment, repatriation, welfare, and medical care.

Requirements for Belize-flagged ships:

Vessels entering service after **23 December 2024** must comply with the amended MLC standards.

For existing vessels, the existing Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) certificates and associated Declarations of Maritime Labour Compliance (DMLCs) retain their validity. However, vessels must confirm compliance with the amendments no later than the date of their first renewal inspection following this date, as it pertains to certification.

Vessel operators must complete and submit Form TDF-034, "Declaration of Compliance with Maritime Labour Convention 2006 Amendments 2022," to technicalservices@immarbe.com, confirming that the amendments are in effect for their fleet. A copy of the completed Declaration Form TDF-034 must be kept on board and presented to PSC officials upon request. This does not prejudice the rights and obligations of seafarers and shipowners as established by the amendments, which take effect from the date of entry into force on **23 December 2024**.

Ship owners

Ship owners are required to:

- make sure that recreational facilities on board include social connectivity, adapted to the special needs of seafarers, including reasonable access to ship-to-shore telephone communications, and internet connectivity, where available. Any charges for using these services must be reasonable in amount. **Ref. Standard A3.1 and Guideline B3.1.11.**

- Provide food and drinking water free of charge and make sure that meals provided are nutritious, balanced, of sufficient quantity and quality. Food is to be prepared in hygienic conditions and with regard to the religious and cultural practices of the seafarers on board. **Ref. Standard A3.2.**
- Make sure that all seafarers are provided with appropriately sized personal protective equipment as a means to prevent occupational accidents, injuries and diseases on board. **Ref. Standard 4.3.**
- Ensure that the certificate(s) or other documentary evidence of financial security must clearly indicate the name of the registered owner of the ship, if it differs from the shipowner. A copy of the evidence of financial security must be submitted to the Flag State before the issuance of the DMLC Part I by the flag. **Ref. Standard A2.5.2 and A4.2.1.**
- Submit an updated DMLC Part II to the Recognized Organization (RO), outlining the measures adopted to ensure continuous compliance with the new requirements. This submission must be made as soon as practicable but no later than the next renewal date of the MLC certificate.

Recognized Organization (RO)

The responsible RO is required to:

- Review and update their procedures for inspections, certifications, and audits taking into account the provisions of the 2022 amendments. DBS has accordingly reviewed and updated the applicable procedures as appropriate.
- Verify that the vessel is provided with a new Declaration of Maritime Labour Compliance (DMLC) Part I and II no later than the date of the first renewal inspection following entry into force of the amendments.
- Conduct inspections for compliance with amendments.

Actions Requested

Owners and Operators must contact the Administration to apply for a new DMLC Part I incorporating the updated requirements. This application must be made no later than the date of the first renewal of the MLC certificate following the entry into force of the amendments on 23 December 2024.

Disciplinary Measures

Failure to adhere to the requirements outlined in the Notice may result in disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by IMMARB. This may include, but is not limited to:

- a) Suspension or revocation of the vessel's certification.
- b) Imposition of fines or penalties.
- c) Restrictions on the vessel's operations or trading activities.
- d) Other legal actions as specified under the Belize Merchant Ships (Registration) Act and Statutory Instrument 56 of 1999.

The Notice advises that all parties must adhere fully to the procedures and requirements to ensure proper certification and avoid any regulatory issues.

Act now

Ship Owners/ Managers/ Operators/ Auditors are to review and comply with the contents of [Merchant Marine Notice MMN-24-011](#) and ensure its provisions are enforced on vessels registered with IMMARB.