



## RAN 09

DEPARTMENT FOR ENTERPRISE

### **SMALL SHIPS REGISTER**

*An introduction to the Small Ships Register and Guidance Notes for application*

**Most regulations, notices and advice notes are available on The Isle of Man Government web site: [www.iomshipregistry.com](http://www.iomshipregistry.com) or by contacting [marine.registry@gov.im](mailto:marine.registry@gov.im)**

1. This is a domestic register for locally owned small ships including yachts under 24 metres, the register being restricted to qualified owners as specified in paragraph 4 below.
2. Part II of the Merchant Shipping Registration Act 1991 came into operation on the 1st December 1991. The former Department of Highways, Ports and Properties made the Merchant Shipping (Small Ships Register) Regulations 1991, which came into effect on the same date. The Regulations re-enacted the 1985 Regulations which originally established the Small Ships Register in the Isle of Man along similar lines to that operated in the United Kingdom by the Register of British Ships, Small Ships Register, Anchor Court, Oceanway, Cardiff, CF24 5JW(Tel. 029 204488 00)
3. The Small Ships Register (SSR) provides a cheap and simple alternative to registration under Part I of the Merchant Shipping Registration Act 1991. The Certificate of Registry issued under the SSR provides evidence of the British Nationality of the ship when it is taken abroad. The register does not enable the ownership of title to a ship to be established nor can maritime mortgages be recorded although owners are required to provide evidence of ownership of the vessel prior to registry. Owners who require these services should apply to register their vessel under Part I at a registry port in the Island.
4. Any ship or vessel which is less than 24 metres (79 feet) in length (other than a fishing vessel or a submersible) may be registered on the Small Ships Register if it meets the following ownership criteria for **both** legal title and beneficial ownership.

**a) LEGAL TITLE TO THE SHIP**

The legal title to the ship must be vested wholly in one or more qualified persons or qualified companies.

Qualified person means –

- A person who is a British citizen resident and domiciled in the Island; or
- An Isle of Man Government Department.

Qualified company means –

- A company which is incorporated in the Island AND has its principal place of business in the Island; **and**
- A company with at least 75% of its shares (taken as a whole), and of each class of its shares is legally and beneficially owned by one or more qualified persons or companies; **and**
- A company which has at least 75% of its directors as qualified persons.

**b) BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP**

The vessel must be beneficially owned –

- not less than 75% of the property in the vessel by one or more qualified persons, or
- wholly by a qualified company or companies; or
- by one or more qualified companies and, as to not less than 75% of the remainder of the property in the vessel, by one or more qualified persons.

Where any share in a vessel is beneficially owned jointly by persons not all of whom are qualified persons or companies, then the whole of that share shall be treated as beneficially owned by persons who are not qualified persons or companies.

Qualified person means –

- A person who is a British citizen resident and domiciled in the Island; or
- An Isle of Man Government Department.

Qualified company means –

- A company which is incorporated in the Island AND has its principal place of business in the Island; **and**
- A company with at least 75% of its shares (taken as a whole), and of each class of its shares is legally and beneficially owned by one or more qualified persons or companies; **and**
- A company which has at least 75% of its directors as qualified persons.

- 5.** If the ship is already registered under Part I of the Merchant Shipping Registration Act 1991 (an Act of Tynwald), the Merchant Shipping Act 1995 (an Act of Parliament) or the relevant legislation in the Channel Islands, at a port in the Isle of Man, United Kingdom or the Channel Islands, that registration may be closed and the ship registered on the SSR, provided that no mortgage or certificate of mortgage or sale are recorded as affecting the ship or shares in the ship. Where the applicant's name and the name of the owner on the Part I Register differ, the applicant will have to provide a statement of entitlement (form SSR.2) signed by the present beneficial owner(s), and satisfactory evidence of ownership (e.g. Bills of Sale).
- 6.** The regulations provide that the registered owner of a small ship shall ensure that within one month of the date on which registration takes effect the registration number preceded by the letters SSR is permanently marked on the ship. Whilst the form of the numbers and lettering is left to the discretion of the owner, it is suggested that they take the form of self adhesive PVC letters/numbers, self adhesive white vinyl stickers, a number plate carved into hardwood or engraved in metal (ie brass or stainless steel). Stickers or plates can be made up on application to COLAS (IOM) Ltd, Balthane Industrial Estate or any engraver or sign manufacturer. The cost of production will have to be borne by the applicant and is additional to the registration fee. The owner is required to make a declaration to the Department to the effect that the vessel is properly marked.
- 7.** Registration on the SSR will be for a period of five years from the date of issue of the Certificate of Registry and can be renewed during the six month period prior to the date of expiry, provided that no changes have occurred to the details included on the Certificate of Registry, in which case it will terminate immediately. The registration number can be retained provided application for re-registration is made within three months after the expiry or termination.
- 8.** In most cases the owner may measure the overall length of the vessel himself (see application form, question 2) "Overall Length" is the distance between the foreside of the foremost fixed permanent structure of the ship. The diagrams in the annex to this notice show between which points on most ships the measurement should be made. On multi-hulled craft the longest hull should be measured.

If in difficulty or for advice on the measuring a craft of novel design, please contact Isle of Man Ship Registry, St Georges Court, Upper Church St. Douglas. Where the vessel is found to be 24 metres or a little more in overall length, it may still qualify. In this case you must have the statement of length at the end of the application form signed by a qualified naval architect or ship surveyor that the ship is less than 24 metres in length when measured in accordance with the

formula contained in the International Convention on the Tonnage Measurement of Ships, 1969.

**9.** Ships bearing undesirable names will be not be registered. These include names that might cause confusion in an emergency, e.g. "Lifeboat", "Mayday" or "SOS" and prefixes like "FV" (Fishing Vessel) and "HMS" and names that could be regarded as offensive.

**10.** Any person who makes an application containing a statement which he knows to be false or reckless or any person who, with intent to deceive, uses or lends to or allows to be used by another person a terminated certificate of registration, or any person who fails to ensure the requirement of marking the ship with the registration number is met, or any person who fails to surrender a certificate of registration when required by the Regulations shall be guilty of an offence. In addition, where it appears that there is any doubt as to the right of any ship to be registered, the owner may be required to give additional evidence.

**11.** Fees.

Initial registration, amended certificate, renewal of registration, re-registration or duplicate certificate  
£35.00

Each transcript of the register  
£40.00

Each inspection of the register  
£20.00