

Vessel Registration in the Cayman Islands

Qualifying Vessels

Vessels of any size, age or type, except commercial fishing vessels, can be registered, provided all quality standards are met.

Qualifying Parties

The following qualify to own a Cayman Islands vessel:

- British subjects.
- Nationals of any European Union (EU) or any European Economic Area (EEA) State including their Overseas Territories.
- Bodies corporate and "shipping entities" established in and having a place of business in any of the above States or Territories. Shipping entities include partnerships, exempted limited partnerships and any other similar entities regardless of whether they have a legal personality separate and distinct from those of their members.
- Foreign Companies registered in the Cayman Islands under the relevant Cayman Islands law and having a place of business within the Islands.

Registration Procedures

The owner of the vessel proposed for Registration must complete and submit the following forms together with the requisite fees:

- **Application to Register at the Port of George Town**
 - This form must be addressed to the Registrar of British Ships in the Cayman Islands.
- **Notice of Name Proposed for a British Ship**
 - Once the requested name has been approved by the Cayman Islands Shipping Registry, all other relevant forms should then be submitted for the process of Registration to be completed.
- **Appointment of Authorised Officer/Agent**
 - Person/Company authorised by the vessel owner to sign the Declaration of Ownership for Company owned vessels.

- **Declaration of Ownership on Behalf of a Body Corporate / Individual**
 - Relevant form should be signed before a Registrar of British Ships, a Justice of the Peace or a Notary Public
- **Declaration of Private Use**
 - For Pleasure Craft only
- **Undertaking to Mark Vessel for Conditional Registration**
 - Where a Certificate of British Registry is to be issued prior to receipt of completed Carving & Marking Note, this is an undertaking to have the vessel marked with its Port of Registry, Official number and Net or Registered tonnage within 21 days in accordance with Section 14 of the Merchant Shipping Law, 1997.
- **Appointment of Representative Person**
 - If the owner (Company/Individual) is not resident in the Cayman Islands, a Representative person resident in the Cayman Islands needs to be appointed. The Representative Person must sign an acceptance to act in this capacity.
- **Title Documents**
 - Builder's Certificate for a new build where title is transferred from the builder to first owner.
 - Bill of Sale transferring title to the new owner where the vessel is not a new build or where a new vessel passes through an intermediary, for example, through a dealer.
- **Certificate of Good Standing**
 - For company owned vessels
- **Certified copy of Passport**
 - For individually owned vessels.
- **Certificate of Incorporation**
- **Certificate of Survey**

Once the Registrar is satisfied with all documentation, a Carving and Marking Note is issued to the owner. The owner then arranges for the vessel to be permanently marked and inspected for verification with the Carving and Marking Note. The surveyor signs the note that is then returned to the Cayman Islands Shipping Registry.

The Registrar then issues a Certificate of British Registry along with the Tonnage Certificate.

Notes

The Official Number and Net or Register Tonnage must be carved on to a plate permanently affixed to the vessel's main beam or other main structural member, where it is clearly visible.

On pleasure craft, the ship's Name is not required to be marked on each of the bows.

If the vessel is fitted with a radio transceiver, a Radio Station Licence is required which should be applied for from the Office of Telecommunications, George Town, Grand Cayman. Also, a Radio Operator's Certificate appropriate to the equipment fitted is required to be held by the operator of the equipment.

Demise Charter Registration

This is a process in which a demise charterer may register a ship under a flag that is different from where the ship was originally registered by the owner. Matters relating to title, mortgage and other proprietary interests continue to be subject to the law of the owner's country of registration. However, the nationality of the ship is that of the flag state where the charterer registers it. Preferential financing and other conditions may be available on the first register (the chartering out country), where the mortgage and other proprietary interests are registered. A charterer might then elect to register in a suitable jurisdiction that could serve as a profit centre for the ship's commercial operation. Demise chartering is also a route through which a person can acquire a ship without purchasing it and then have it registered in the Cayman Islands. There is also provision for sub-demise chartering.

Provisional and Conditional Registration

In cases where it may be difficult or impossible to effect permanent registration within commercial time constraints, provisional or conditional registration can be effected. This allows the vessel to be registered for a strictly limited period to allow the completion of the full process, and permanent registration is dependent on satisfactory completion of all safety surveys within a specific period. Mortgage registration is available under these procedures and any such mortgage will remain in effect, even if the conditions for permanent registration are not met.

Surveys

A Tonnage Measurement Survey is required for all vessels under the following conditions:

- If the vessel is located within the Cayman Islands, the Cayman Islands Shipping Registry will conduct the tonnage survey.
- If the vessel is located outside the Cayman Islands, the Cayman Islands Shipping Registry may also conduct the survey or the owner may apply to the nearest office of one of the following Classification Societies for the tonnage survey to be conducted:
 - American Bureau of Shipping (ABS)
 - Bureau Veritas (BV)
 - Det Norske Veritas (DNV)
 - Germanischer Lloyd (GL)
 - Lloyds Register of Shipping (LR)
 - Registro Italiano Navale (RINA)

All vessels must be compliant with the relevant requirements of the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, 1972, as amended (COLREGS 1972).

All Vessels over 400 gross tonnage must be compliant with the International Oil Pollution Prevention requirements.