

***Notice to Shipowners, Ship Operators and Managers, and Owners' representatives***

***This notice revokes MSD Notice No 11***

***MSD Notice No 36***

**Guidelines for the ascertainment of seaworthiness of vessels being registered as Maltese ships**

The Merchant Shipping directorate has reviewed the guidelines for ascertaining the seaworthiness required in terms of section 12(a) of the Merchant Shipping Act for vessels being registered as Maltese ships. The new guidelines come into effect on the 1 March 2000.

As a rule, trading ships of 25 years and over will not be registered, while, application for the registration of trading ships of less than 25 years will be considered subject to:

- the ship being either in class or in the process of being classed with a recognised classification society;
- the receipt of an up to date class survey status report or, information on the validity of the current statutory certificates including details of any pending recommendations, or otherwise, related to both class and statutory certificates;
- the receipt of an affirmation by the relative class that the ship is in a position to be issued with all the appropriate statutory certificates without recommendations.

Furthermore, registration of trading ships of 20 years and over but less than 25 years is also subject to the outcome of a prior inspection by an authorised flag State inspector; the Directorate may require the inspection to be carried out in drydock. Where the Directorate allows the inspection to be carried out

on registration only on non-operational provisional certificate of registry will be issued.

Ships of 15 years and over but less than 20 years shall also be presented for an inspection by an authorised flag State inspector within one month of registration. Owners may opt to have their ship inspected prior to registration. A negative outcome of the inspection of a registered ship may lead to the immediate closure of registry.

Pre-registration inspections, even when allowed to be carried out on registration, are subject to a charge of Lm1,000.

Inspections within one month of registration of ships of less than 5,000 net tonnage are subject to a LM500 charge; there is still no charge for ships of 5,000 net tonnage and over.

Payments must be made prior to the authorisation of the inspection. The charges quoted above are a once only payment. However, unforeseen costs not covered by these amounts, such as higher inspection fees, travel expenses, supplementary inspections, etc will be charged separately.

It is emphasised that the final decision on the registration and seaworthiness of a vessel still remains at the discretion of the Directorate.

Merchant Shipping Directorate  
Valletta.

16 February 2000