
Electronic Statutory Certificates

Notice to ship owners, managers, Masters, Approved Nautical Inspectors, Recognised Organisations and surveyors

This Notice supersedes BMA Information Bulletin No.175

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This Marine Notice (MN) outlines the position of the Bahamas Maritime Authority (BMA) on electronic statutory certificates.

2. Application

- 2.1. Applies to all Bahamian ships.

3. Introduction

- 3.1. The BMA supports efforts to reduce administrative burdens and increase operational efficiency on ships and recognises the use of e-certificates in lieu of traditional paper certificates.
- 3.2. Compliance with statutory requirements has historically been demonstrated by means of a paper certificate in the format specified in the relevant international Convention, Code or other legislation. Paper certificates are verified by means of a signature by an authorised person.
- 3.3. Occasionally, paper certificates are damaged or lost, or a valid certificate has been issued but has not reached the ship, leading to action by Port State Control (PSC).
- 3.4. The use of e-certificates is accepted by the BMA, provided that the provisions of FAL.5/Circ.39/Rev.2 are followed.
- 3.5. Several Recognised Organisations are now able to issue e-certificates to ships in lieu of traditional paper certificates.

4. Recognised Organisations Authorised to Issue Electronic Statutory Certificates

- 4.1. Recognised Organisations shall apply to the BMA Inspections & Surveys department for authorisation to issue electronic statutory certificates when they are in a position to do so.
- 4.2. The application is to include:
- i. a description of the electronic certificate system;
 - ii. details of how the system complies with [FAL.5/Circ.39/Rev.2](#)¹;
 - iii. details of how certificates are endorsed when there is no internet connection;
 - iv. the web address for verification of the certificates;
 - v. specimen copies of the certificates.
- 4.3. The BMA will review the application and, if satisfied that the system meets the requirements of FAL.5/Circ.39/Rev.2, will add the appropriate details to the “Survey and Certification” module in the IMO Global Integrated Shipping Information System (GISIS)² and add the Recognised Organisation to the Annex to this Notice.

5. BMA Issued Documents

- 5.1. Most documents issued by the BMA are currently issued as paper documents.
- 5.2. Paper documents may have either a manual signature or a scanned signature printed on the document. Paper documents are generally printed on BMA headed paper (with the exception of Carving and Marking Note, MLC Statement of Interpretation, MLC Statement of Acceptance of Financial Security, Certificate of Inspection and Certificate of Special Inspection). Radio licences are printed on Utilities Regulation and Competition Authority (URCA) headed paper.
- 5.3. The BMA will be progressively moving towards the full implementation of electronic certificates.
- 5.4. Commencing early 2021, the following documents will be issued electronically:
- i. Certificate of Insurance or other Financial Security in Respect of Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage
 - ii. Certificate of Insurance or Other Financial Security in Respect of Civil Liability for Bunker Oil Pollution Damage
 - iii. Certificate of Insurance for Wreck Removal in Respect of Liability for the Removal of Wrecks

¹ [https://wwwcdn.imo.org/localresources/en/OurWork/Facilitation/Documents/FAL.5-Circ.39-Rev.2%20-%20Guidelines%20For%20The%20Use%20Of%20Electronic%20Certificates%20\(Secretariat\).pdf](https://wwwcdn.imo.org/localresources/en/OurWork/Facilitation/Documents/FAL.5-Circ.39-Rev.2%20-%20Guidelines%20For%20The%20Use%20Of%20Electronic%20Certificates%20(Secretariat).pdf)

² <https://gis.imo.org>

- iv. Certificate of Inspection
 - v. Certification of Special Inspection
 - vi. Exemption Certificate
 - vii. Dispensation Certificate
 - viii. Exception Certificate
 - ix. CCSS Exemption Certificate
 - x. Dispensation/Exemption Certificate
 - xi. Local Safety Certificate
 - xii. Caribbean Cargo Ship Safety Certificate
 - xiii. Safety Certificate for Small Commercial Vessels Operating in the Caribbean
 - xiv. Document of approval for Electronic record Keeping Systems
 - xv. Domestic Load line Certificate
 - xvi. ISM DOC Full Certificate
 - xvii. ISM DOC Interim Certificate
 - xviii. Certificate of Endorsement
- 5.5. The electronic certificates issued by the BMA will contain all elements in accordance with FAL.5/Circ.39/Rev.2.
- 5.6. Each electronic certificate contains a Quick Response (QR) code to facilitate the verification process. Relevant parties seeking to verify the authenticity and validity of electronic certificates can do so online either by using the QR Code found in each electronic certificate or by entering the unique tracking number at the online verification system at [Bahamas Maritime Authority Verify Certificate](#).
- 5.7. Original hardcopy certificates that were previously issued by the BMA shall remain valid and be carried on board till such time the electronic certificates are available on board.
- 5.8. All electronic certificates issued by the BMA, or by a Recognised Organisation on behalf of the BMA, that conform to FAL.5/Circ.39/Rev.2 shall be deemed valid in accordance with all applicable international instruments to which The Bahamas is a Party. A copy of this Marine Notice should be placed on board to facilitate the acceptance of electronic certificates by other relevant authorities.
- 5.9. Adobe Reader is required to view the electronic certificates. Bahamian ships using e-certificates should have a current version of the Adobe Reader software installed on board – the software can be downloaded free of charge from [Adobe.com](#).

- 5.10. In order to validate the digital security of the electronic certificate, the user may be required to perform a one-time update of the list of trusted certificates by going through the following steps;
 - i. Ensure computer is connected to the Internet
 - ii. Open Adobe Reader
 - iii. Go to Edit – Preferences – Trust Manager
 - iv. Select “Update Now” under Automatic Adobe Approved Trust List (AATL) updates
- 5.11. Owners of Bahamian ships should continue to exercise due diligence to address any entry and clearance requirements that are specific to each port that the ship calls at.
- 5.12. Queries relating to this Notice or for assistance regarding the authenticity or validity of electronic certificates that requires urgent attention can be directed to tech@bahamasmaritime.com.

Annex

Recognised Organisations authorised to issue electronic statutory certificates to Bahamian ships, in accordance with FAL.5/Circ.39/Rev.2

Recognised Organisation	Certificate Verification Website
DNVGL	https://trust.dnvgl.com/DocumentVerification
Indian Register of Shipping (IRS)	http://www.irclass.org/marine/e-certificates-verification/
Nippon Kaiji Kyokai (ClassNK)	https://e-certificate.classnk.or.jp/CERF00010.aspx
Bureau Veritas (BV)	https://ecertificates-marine.bureauveritas.com/
China Classification Society (CCS)	http://www.ccs.org.cn/electrocert/veryfication!index.do
American Bureau of Shipping (ABS)	https://www.eagle.org/safenet/certificate/certificate_lookup
RINA	https://ecertificate.rina.org/
Korean Register of Shipping (KRS)	http://e-cert.krs.co.kr/
Polski Rejestr Statkow (PRS)	https://www.prs.pl/e-certificate
Lloyd's Register (LR)	https://www.lr.org/en/ecerts

How to verify the validity of Bahamas Issued Electronic Certificates

Method 1 - Verification by scanning the QR Code

R214 - Version 1.1

Reason for new certificate: Renewal



CERTIFICATE OF INSURANCE OR OTHER FINANCIAL SECURITY IN RESPECT OF CIVIL LIABILITY FOR OIL POLLUTION DAMAGE



Tracking Number
BMA-CLC-161-20

Method 2 - Verification by entering the Certificate number (unique tracking number) and/or certificate Issued date/ Vessel IMO Number at the Online Verification System at [Bahamas Maritime Authority Verify Certificate](#)

The status of the certificate will be displayed online.

Method 3 - Offline verification, can be done by looking out for the digital signature ribbon on the top of the digital certificate to check that the digital security signature to verify the authenticity of the certificate.

Revision History

Version	Description of Revision
1.0	First Issue