

FLYER TO THE YACHTING INDUSTRY (03/2025)

Unsafe working at height

Along with the Maritime Administrations of several other Flag States, the Maritime Authority of the Cayman Islands (MACI) are deeply concerned about recent reports of unsafe working practices at height on large yachts.

These incidents involve crew working aloft without adequate safety precautions, such as going outboard of safety rails or standing unsecured on high superstructures.

Although many vessels maintain comprehensive mini or full Safety management systems (SMS's) that include good procedures for working safely at height, we are aware that in some cases, actual practices can diverge from documented safety protocols. These actions expose individuals to a significant risk of falling which could result in life-changing injuries or even death.

Yacht masters and supervisors have a duty of care to ensure the safety of their crews. Best practice includes:

- Creating a safety culture in which anyone on board can challenge unsafe practices
- Empowering crews with 'Stop work' authority if a situation becomes unsafe
- Training crews to safely use equipment, and regularly practicing rescue drills
- Making it clear that safety 'short cuts' are no longer acceptable practice
- Reinforcing the importance of toolbox talks, Permits to Work, and Risk Assessments
- Ensuring regular equipment inspections to ensure it remains fit for use
- Train crews to safely use equipment

MACI strongly recommends that yacht builders, designers and managers pay attention to safe working areas during the design and construction of a vessel, and ensure that safety points, hand rails and steps adequately enable safe working at height.

Further information regarding overside working and external access systems can be found in Common Annex B of the Red Ensign Group Yacht Code, a copy of which can be downloaded here:

www.redensigngroup.org/media/1alpazfg/reg-yc-july-2024-edition-common-annexes.pdf



Maritime Authority of the Cayman Islands

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(In conjunction with other Flag States and the Confidential Human Factors Incident Reporting Programme)

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