

## SHIPPING NOTICE 01/2023 (Rev. 01)

### CAYMAN ISLANDS SUBMERSIBLE CRAFT REQUIREMENTS.

**To:** CURRENT AND PROSPECTIVE OWNERS/OPERATORS AND BUILDERS OF SUBMERSIBLE CRAFT INTENDING TO REGISTER IN THE CAYMAN ISLANDS OR OPERATING FROM CAYMAN ISLANDS SHIPS.

#### 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Merchant Shipping Act (2021 Revision) (MSA) requires that Submersible Craft operating from Cayman Islands ships must be independently registered and certified by the Cayman Islands Shipping Registry (CISR) regardless of the parent vessel's registration status or type.
- 1.2 If so desired, submersibles operating from non-Cayman Islands ships may be registered and certified with the CISR at the owner/operator's request.
- 1.3 This Shipping Notice provides an outline of the CISR requirements for owning and operating submersibles, but the various regulatory instruments should be consulted for detailed requirements.

#### 2. REFERENCES

- 2.1 The Merchant Shipping Act (MSA) refers to the Merchant Shipping Act (2021 Revision).
- 2.2 From section 212 of the MSA –

*“submersible craft” means any description of manned mobile submersible apparatus, not being a diving bell, which is designed to maintain some or all of its occupants at or near atmospheric pressure including free, self-propelled, tethered, towed or bottom contact propelled apparatus and atmospheric diving suits;*

- 2.3 The Operations Regulations means the Merchant Shipping (Submersible Craft Operations) (Cayman Islands) Regulations 1991.
- 2.4 The Construction Regulations means The Merchant Shipping (Submersible Craft Construction, Equipment and Survey) (Cayman Islands) Regulations 1991.

### **3. REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS**

3.1 In order to register a submersible with the CISR the Registrar will require:

- A Certificate of Survey (drafted by the attending CISR surveyor)
- A Submersible Craft Safety Certificate (discussed below)
- The standard registration forms available from [www.cishipping.com](http://www.cishipping.com)

### **4. MARKING OF THE SUBMERSIBLE**

4.1 The Call sign and official number are to be displayed on a metal plate permanently affixed to the internal structure of the main pressure hull.

4.2 The official number must be conspicuously marked on the external structure of the craft.

### **5. SURVEY AND CERTIFICATION**

5.1 The Cayman Islands Submersible Craft Safety Certificate is valid for 2 years and subject to one annual survey followed by a renewal survey.

5.2 Initial, annual and renewal surveys require a full depth dive to confirm that systems are functioning and that operations are conducted in accordance with the approved manuals. Details of the scope of surveys and approvals are discussed in sections 6 through to 9 of this Shipping Notice.

5.3 Similar to ships' certificates, the annual survey can be done within the window of + and – 3 months of the anniversary date of the certificate expiry. In practice anniversary dates of CI certificates are harmonised with Class certificates to be able to coordinate attendance together. The owner/operator must request surveyor attendance as required to maintain the validity of the Safety Certificate.

5.4 Under the Merchant Shipping Act, it is an offence to operate a submersible to which the Regulations apply without a valid Safety Certificate.

### **6 OVERVIEW OF TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS**

6.1 Standards for construction and operation of submersible craft can be found in the REG Yacht Code (Annex K4), the Submersible Craft Construction Regulations, The Submersible Craft Operations Regulations and the Merchant Shipping Act. An outline of the requirements of each of these instruments is included below. Further guidance can be found in IMO MSC/Circ. 981.

## **7. TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS OF THE REG YACHT CODE**

- 7.1 Applicable to both REG Part A and REG Part B vessels, Common Annex K4 of the REG Yacht Code<sup>1</sup> requires that submersibles onboard code compliant Large Yachts –
- are subject to the standards of the Flag State;
  - be constructed and maintained in accordance with Class Society rules;
  - have supporting and lifting equipment on board the parent vessel, subject to Class Society rules and inspection;
  - have the Limiting Sea State for the submersible craft and parent vessel defined;
  - operate a Safety Management System run by the parent vessel for the submersible, including a Submersible Operations Manual, and be subject to verification at surveys;
  - have a submersible craft safety certificate;
  - be maintained as specified by the manufacturer; and
  - be operated by a crew with both adequate theoretical and practical training for the type of craft, and, demonstrated ability to operate it.

## **8 TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS OF THE MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT AND REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO CONSTRUCTION OF SUBMERSIBLE CRAFT**

- 8.1 Similar to newbuild yachts and ships, in order to be certified, a submersible craft must be surveyed during construction by CISR in collaboration with the builder in accordance with the Cayman Islands Merchant Shipping (Submersible Craft Construction, Equipment and Survey) Regulations, covering items including, but not limited to –
- emergency supplies & equipment;
  - operational life support hours (standard & emergency);
  - atmosphere monitors;
  - surface communications equipment;
  - navigation equipment;
  - hull & view port protection and exostructure;
  - lifting points and redundancy arrangements;
  - reserve/emergency buoyancy & location systems;
  - freeboard, structure and boarding arrangements;
  - power and propulsion arrangements;
  - structure and hull penetrations; and
  - firefighting arrangements.

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<sup>1</sup> Edition 3 of the Large Yacht Code also outlined the same

## **9 TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS OF THE MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT AND REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO THE OPERATION OF SUBMERSIBLE CRAFT**

9.1 The craft must also be surveyed once in operation onboard the parent vessel for a full depth dive, to confirm the requirements of the Merchant Shipping (Submersible Craft Operations) (Cayman Islands) Regulations are being implemented. The survey will cover aspects including, but not limited to –

- Records and logs:
  - submersible logbooks, dive records; and
  - pilot qualifications, medical, logbook.
- Parent vessel:
  - storage, launching and boarding arrangements and equipment;
  - surface officer's and chase boat's equipment;
  - storage of consumables, e.g Oxygen, CO2 scrubber media, emergency food supplies, etc; and
  - battery charging arrangements;
- Full Depth Dive:
  - manoeuvring;
  - communications;
  - emergency systems;
  - life-support systems; and
  - crew training effectiveness.

## **10 APPROVAL OF DRAWINGS, PLANS AND MANUALS**

10.1 As part of the initial certification process for newbuilds and existing craft, manuals and plans are to be submitted to the CISR for approval. Some aspects of which are supplied by the builder and some by the operator –

- The Operations Manual,
  - including minimum information as per the MSA
  - identifying individuals in the Chain of command as per the MSA
- Launching procedure
  - Including parent vessel lifting equipment.
- Emergency recovery procedure
  - Including on site equipment and contacts for external assistance.
- Pilot training syllabus
  - Path to certification and maintaining certification
  - Medical certificate

## **11. SURVEY PLANNING**

- 11.1 Owners, operators and builders should contact the CISR at [technical@cishipping.com](mailto:technical@cishipping.com) as early as possible when planning for construction/purchase of a submersible craft, or parent ship to ensure that essential design considerations can be accommodated, and to ensure that the process of survey and certification does not lead to any delays.
- 11.2 For existing submersible craft in service, annual or renewal surveys can be scheduled by contacting the relevant regional planning group:
- For surveys in the Americas: [survey.ky@cishipping.com](mailto:survey.ky@cishipping.com)
  - For surveys in Europe, Middle-East and Africa: [survey.uk@cishipping.com](mailto:survey.uk@cishipping.com)
  - For surveys in the Asia-Pacific region: [survey.asia@cishipping.com](mailto:survey.asia@cishipping.com)