

## **MCI Circular 309/2024**

**To:** Owners, Technical Managers, Deputy Registrars and Fleet Managers

**Subject:** Amended Annex 4 – Minimum Safe Manning levels for Commercial yachts  $\geq$  24m

**Date:** 7th January 2025

### **Summary**

This Circular informs Owners and Technical Managers about the amendment to the Annex 4 of the Cook Islands Code of Practice for Large Yachts ( $\geq$  24 meters), entering into force from **01 February 2025**.

### **Applicability:**

This applies to all commercial yachts (motor or sailing) of  $\geq$  24 meters in load line length, which, at the time of registration, are in commercial use for sport or pleasure, carry no cargo, and transport up to 12 passengers.

### **Required Actions:**

#### **1.0 GENERAL NOTES**

The following notes should be read in conjunction with the following amended minimum safe manning scales.

##### ***a. Dual Certification***

Where appropriate dual deck and assistant engineer roles may be considered as indicated in the Minimum Safe Manning Document, provided that the officer is suitably qualified in both disciplines and that the person taking the dual role is a person other than the Master.

In such cases additional rating(s) may be required. A dual purpose (deck/engineer) will be considered provided that the yacht has been assigned a UMS notation by a Classification Society for unmanned machinery space operation or fulfils the following criteria:

- It has full bridge control of main engine manoeuvring;
- It is fitted with high level bilge alarms in the machinery space; and
- The engine room alarm system, including the fire alarm, if fitted, is relayed to the accommodation and/or the bridge.

##### ***b. Gas turbine powered yachts $\geq$ 24m***

On ALL yachts with gas turbine propulsion, or gas turbine propulsion in addition to diesel engine propulsion, the Chief Engineer is required to have attended an approved gas turbine manufacturer's course.

The manning scale for yachts with gas turbine propulsion, or gas turbine propulsion in addition to diesel engine propulsion, is identical to the following tables for the manning scale on motor yachts.

**c. Alternative and novel fuel powered yachts  $\geq$  24m**

On yachts fitted with alternative or novel fuels/technologies propulsion systems, the Administration may consider additional requirements, such as enhanced manning complement or specific training standards, when issuing the Minimum Safe Manning Certificate.

**d. Master (Code vessels < 200 GT)**

The Master (Code vessels < 200 GT, limited to 150 miles from a safe haven) certificate may be used instead of the Yachtmaster Offshore certificate.

The Master (Code Vessels < 200 GT unlimited area) certificate may be used instead of the Yachtmaster Ocean certificate.

**e. Changes in vessel parameters**

In the event of any change in equipment, construction or use of the yacht, which may affect the Minimum Safe Manning level, the Owner or the operator should take due cognisance of this section and, if appropriate, apply for the issue of a new Minimum Safe Manning Document.

**f. Withdrawal of Minimum Safe Manning Document**

A Minimum Safe Manning Document of a yacht may be withdrawn if an Owner or operator fails to submit a new proposal when a vessel changes trading area(s), construction, machinery/equipment, or operation and/or method of maintenance has changed, or a yacht persistently fails to comply with the hours of rest requirements.

**g. Basic training (STCW Reg. VI/1)**

a) Seafarers must receive appropriate approved basic training or instruction in:

- personal survival techniques as set out in STCW Table A-VI/1-1;
- fire prevention and firefighting as set out in STCW Table A-VI/1-2;
- elementary first aid as set out in STCW Table A-VI/1-3;
- personal safety and social responsibilities as set out in STCW Table A-VI/1-4.

- b) They must hold documentary evidence of successful completion of the basic training in accordance with STCW Reg. VI/1 and Section A-VI/1 of the STCW Code.

**Notes:**

1. Officers required to have advance courses related to their specific CoC, must comply with the STCW Convention, as amended;
2. For yachts subject to the ISPS Code, seafarers must also complete security awareness training as set out in STCW Table A-VI/6, with documentary evidence as required under STCW Reg. VI/6 and Section A-VI/6 of the STCW Code.

**h. Grade of certificates and their explanation**

a. (Unrestricted STCW Certificates)

R.II/1 Officer in charge of a navigational watch of vessels of 500 GT and over

R.II/2 Master and Chief Mate of vessels of 500 and GT over

R.II/3 Master & Officers of vessels less than 500 GT, engaged on near-coastal voyages

R.II/4 Ratings forming part of a navigational watch

R.II/5 Able seafarer deck

R.III/1 Officer in charge of an engineering watch of vessels over 750 kW

R.III/2 Chief Engineer and Second Engineer of vessels over 3000 kW

R.III/3 Chief Engineer and Second Engineer of vessels between 750 kW and 3000 kW

R.III/4 Ratings forming part of an engineering watch

R.III/5 Able seafarer engine

R. III/6 Electro-technical Officer

R. III/7 Electro-technical rating

b. (Yacht certificate system introduced by the UK MCA)

Maritime Cook Islands also accepts equivalent qualifications issued by UK MCA according to the following Marine Shipping Notices:

- Deck Officers: MSN 1858 (M) Amendment 1
- Engineers Officers: MSN 1859 (M+F) Amendment 1
- Deck Ratings: MSN 1862 (M) Amendment 1

c. Alternative yacht certificate systems

Maritime Cook Islands is willing to accept equivalent qualifications for yachts operating in other jurisdictions.

Requests for acceptance of alternative qualifications shall be submitted by owners/managers at the time of the Minimum safe manning application and they will be individually considered by Maritime Cook Islands.

**2.0 MINIMUM SAFE MANNING SCALE FOR MOTOR YACHTS**

General Requirements or Conditions:

- Vessel must carry at least one person holding GMDSS qualifications for distress and safety radio communication purposes, and vessel must be capable of maintaining a continuous radio watch while at sea.
- Vessel must carry a sufficient number of trained personnel to assist passengers in an emergency.
- A crew member will be deemed acceptable for Yacht Rating position on yachts under 500 GT if they have undergone the training as per STCW Convention Annex Chapter VI Regulation VI/1.
- A ship's cook is required if the number of crew carried is 10 or more.

**2.1 Operations up to 60nm from a Safe Haven:**

	60nm									
	<200GT			>=200GT but < 500GT			>=500GT but <3000GT			
	<1500kW	<3000kW	No.	<3000kW	<6000kW	No.	<3000kW	<6000kW	<9000kW	No.
Master	Reg. II/3 or YM Offshore	Reg. II/3 or YM Offshore	1	Reg. II/3 or Master(Y) <500GT	Reg. II/3 or Master(Y) <500GT	1	Reg. II/2 or Master(Y) <3000GT	Reg. II/2 or Master(Y) <3000GT	Reg. II/2 or Master(Y)	1
Ch. Mate				Reg. II/3 or YM Coastal	Reg. II/3 or YM Coastal	1	Reg. II/2 or OOW(Y) <3000GT	Reg. II/2 or OOW(Y) <3000GT	Reg. II/2 or OOW(Y) <3000GT	1
OOW (Nav.)										
Ch. Eng.	Reg. III/1 or AEC a)	Reg. III/1 or AEC a) b)	1	Reg. III/3 or Y3 or Y4 b)	Reg. III/2 or Y1, Y2 or Y3 b)	1	Reg. III/3 or Y3	Reg. III/2 or Y2 a)	Reg. III/2 or Y1	1
2nd Eng.								Reg. III/2 or MEOL(Y) b)	Reg. III/2 or MEOL(Y) a)	1
OOW (Eng.)				Reg. III/1 or AEC a)	Reg. III/1 or AEC a)	1	Reg. III/1 or MEOL(Y) a)			
YR(Nav)	Reg. VI/1 or Yacht Rating CoP	Reg. VI/1 or Yacht Rating CoP	1	Reg. VI/1 or Yacht Rating CoP	Reg. VI/1 or Yacht Rating CoP	2	Reg. II/4 or NWR CoP	Reg. II/4 or NWR CoP	Reg. II/4 or NWR CoP	2
			<b>TOTAL:</b>			<b>TOTAL:</b>				<b>TOTAL:</b>
			3			6				6

## 2.2 Operations up to 150nm from a Safe Haven:

	150nm									
	<200GT			≥200GT but < 500GT			≥500GT but <3000GT			
	<1500kW	<3000kW	No.	<3000KW	<6000kW	No.	<3000kW	<6000kW	<9000kW	No.
Master	Reg. II/3 or YM Offshore	Reg. II/3 or YM Offshore	1	Reg. II/3 or Master(Y) <500GT	Reg. II/3 or Master(Y) <500GT	1	Reg. II/2 or Master(Y) <3000GT	Reg. II/2 or Master(Y) <3000GT	Reg. II/2 or Master(Y)	1
Ch. Mate	Reg. II/3 or YM Coastal	Reg. II/3 or YM Coastal	1	Reg. II/3 or YM Offshore	Reg. II/3 or YM Offshore	1	Reg. II/2 or Chief Mate(Y) <3000GT	Reg. II/2 or Chief Mate(Y) <3000GT	Reg. II/2 or Chief Mate(Y) <3000GT	1
OOW (Nav.)										
Ch. Eng.	Reg. III/3 or Y4 a)	Reg. III/3 or Y3 or Y4 a) b)	1	Reg. III/3 or Y3	Reg. III/2 or Y1, Y2 or Y3 b)	1	Reg. III/3 or Y2	Reg. III/2 or Y2 a)	Reg. III/2 or Y1	1
2nd Eng.					Reg. III/2 or MEOL(Y) a)	1	Reg. III/3 or Y3	Reg. III/2 or Y3 a)	Reg. III/2 or Y2 b)	1
OOW (Eng.)				Reg. III/1 or MEOL(Y) a)						
YR(Nav)	Reg. VI/1 or Yacht Rating CoP	Reg. VI/1 or Yacht Rating CoP	1	Reg. VI/1 or Yacht Rating CoP	Reg. VI/1 or Yacht Rating CoP	2	Reg. II/4 or NWR CoP	Reg. II/4 or NWR CoP	Reg. II/4 or NWR CoP	2
			<b>TOTAL:</b> 4			<b>TOTAL:</b> 6				<b>TOTAL:</b> 6

### 2.3 Unlimited Operations:

	Unlimited									
	<200GT			>=200GT but < 500GT			>=500GT but <3000GT			
	<1500kW	<3000kW		<3000kW	<6000kW		<3000kW	<6000kW	<9000kW	
Master	Reg. II/2 or YM Ocean	Reg. II/2 or YM Ocean	1	Reg. II/2 or Master (Y) <500GT	Reg. II/2 or Master (Y) <500GT	1	Reg. II/2 or Master(Y) <3000GT	Reg. II/2 or Master(Y) <3000GT	Reg. II/2 or Master(Y)	1
Ch. Mate	Reg. II/1 or YM Offshore	Reg. II/1 or YM Offshore	1	Reg. II/1 or OOW(Y) <3000GT	Reg. II/1 or OOW(Y) <3000GT	1	Reg. II/2 or Chief Mate(Y) <3000GT	Reg. II/2 or Chief Mate(Y) <3000GT	Reg. II/2 or Chief Mate(Y) <3000GT	1
OOW (Nav.)							Reg. II/1 or OOW(Y) <3000GT	Reg. II/1 or OOW(Y) <3000GT	Reg. II/1 or OOW(Y) <3000GT	1
Ch. Eng.	Reg. III/3 or Y4 a)	Reg. III/3 or Y3 or Y4 b)	1	Reg. III/3 or Y3	Reg. III/2 or Y1, Y2 or Y3 b)	1	Reg. III/3 or Y2	Reg. III/2 or Y1	Reg. III/2 or Y1	1
2nd Eng.				Reg. III/3 or Y4 a)	Reg. III/2 or Y3 or Y4 a)	1	Reg. III/3 or Y3	Reg. III/2 or Y3 a)	Reg. III/2 or Y2 b)	1
OOW (Eng.)	Reg. III/1 or MEOL(Y) a)	Reg. III/1 or MEOL(Y) a)	1							
YR(Nav)	Reg. VI/1 or Yacht Rating CoP	Reg. VI/1 or Yacht Rating CoP	2	Reg. VI/1 or Yacht Rating CoP	Reg. VI/1 or Yacht Rating CoP	2	Reg. II/4 or NWR CoP	Reg. II/4 or NWR CoP	Reg. II/4 or NWR CoP	2
		<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>6</b>		<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>6</b>			<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>7</b>

#### Special requirements or conditions (if any) for Tables 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3

- A dual deck/engine role may be considered, provided the officer taking the dual role is suitably qualified in both disciplines and is other than the Master. In such cases, an additional rating will be required.
- The certificate holder must have attended an approved engine manufacturer's course appropriate to the engine type and power range.

### 3.0 MINIMUM SAFE MANNING SCALE FOR SAILING YACHTS

#### General Requirements or Conditions:

- Vessel must carry at least one person holding GMDSS qualifications for distress and safety radio communication purposes, and vessel shall be capable of maintaining a continuous radio watch while at sea.
- Vessel must carry a sufficient number of trained personnel to assist passengers in an emergency.
- A crew member shall be deemed acceptable for Yacht Rating position on yachts under 500 GT if they have undergone the training as per STCW Convention Annex Chapter VI Regulation VI/1.
- A ship's cook is required if the number of crew carried is 10 or more.



### 3.1 Operations up to 60nm from a Safe Haven:

	60nm								
	<200GT		>=200GT but <500GT		>=500GT but <1000GT		>=1000GT but <3000GT		
	<750kW	No.	<1500kW	No.	<1500kW	No.	<3000kW	<6000kW	
								No.	
Master	Reg. II/3 or YM Offshore	1	Reg. II/3 or Master(Y) <500GT	1	Reg. II/2 or Master(Y)	1	Reg. II/2 or Master(Y)	Reg. II/2 or Master(Y)	1
Ch. Mate	Reg. II/3 or YM Coastal	1	Reg. II/3 or YM Coastal	1	Reg. II/2 or OOW(Y) <3000GT	1	Reg. II/2 or OOW(Y) <3000GT	Reg. II/2 or OOW(Y) <3000GT	1
OOW (Nav.)									
Ch. Eng.	Reg. III/3 or AEC a)	1	Reg. III/3 or Y4	1	Reg. III/3 or Y3	1	Reg. III/3 or Y2	Reg. III/2 or Y2 a) b)	1
2nd Eng.									
OOW (Eng.)			Reg. III/1 or AEC a)	1	Reg. III/1 or AEC a)	1	Reg. III/1 or AEC a)	Reg. III/1 or AEC a)	1
YR(Nav)	Reg. VI/1 or Yacht Rating CoP	1	Reg. VI/1 or Yacht Rating CoP	2	Reg. II/4 or NWR CoP	2	Reg. II/4 or NWR CoP	Reg. II/4 or NWR CoP	2
		4		6		6			6

### 3.2 Operations up to 150nm from a Safe Haven:

150nm									
<200GT			>=200GT but <500GT		>=500GT but <1000GT		>=1000GT but <3000GT		
<750kW		No.	<1500kW		<1500kW		<3000kW	<6000kW	
		No.						No.	
Master	Reg. II/3 or YM Offshore	1	Reg. II/3 or Master(Y) <500GT	1	Reg. II/2 or Master(Y)	1	Reg. II/2 or Master(Y)	Reg. II/2 or Master(Y)	1
Ch. Mate	Reg. II/3 or YM Offshore	1	Reg. II/3 or YM Offshore	1	Reg. II/2 or Chief Mate(Y)	1	Reg. II/2 or Chief Mate(Y)	Reg. II/2 or Chief Mate(Y)	1
OOW (Nav.)									
Ch. Eng.	Reg. III/3 or MEOL(Y) a)	1	Reg. III/3 or Y3	1	Reg. III/3 or Y3	1	Reg. III/3 or Y2	Reg. III/2 or Y2 a) b)	1
2nd Eng.									
OOW (Eng.)			Reg. III/1 or AEC a)	1	Reg. III/1 or MEOL(Y) a)	1	Reg. III/1 or MEOL(Y) a)	Reg. III/1 or MEOL(Y) a)	1
YR(Nav)	Reg. VI/1 or Yacht Rating CoP	1	Reg. VI/1 or Yacht Rating CoP	2	Reg. II/4 or NWR CoP	2	Reg. II/4 or NWR CoP	Reg. II/4 or NWR CoP	3
		4		6		6			7



### 3.3 Unlimited Operations:

	Unlimited								
	<200GT		>=200GT but <500GT		>=500GT but <1000GT		>=1000GT but <3000GT		
	<750kW	No.	<1500kW	No.	<1500kW	No.	<3000kW	<6000kW	
Master	Reg. II/2 or YM Ocean	1	Reg. II/2 or Master(Y) <500GT	1	Reg. II/2 or Master(Y)	1	Reg. II/2 or Master(Y)	Reg. II/2 or Master(Y)	1
Ch. Mate	Reg. II/1 or YM Offshore	1	Reg. II/1 or OOW(Y) <3000GT	1	Reg. II/2 or Chief Mate(Y)	1	Reg. II/2 or Chief Mate(Y)	Reg. II/2 or Chief Mate(Y)	1
OOW (Nav.)			Reg. II/1 or YM Offshore	1	Reg. II/1 or OOW(Y) <3000GT	1	Reg. II/1 or OOW(Y) <3000GT	Reg. II/1 or OOW(Y) <3000GT	1
Ch. Eng.	Reg. III/3 or MEOL(Y) a)	1	Reg. III/3 or Y3	1	Reg. III/3 or Y3	1	Reg. III/3 or Y1	Reg. III/2 or Y1	1
2nd Eng.							Reg. III/3 or Y3	Reg. III/2 or Y3 b)	1
OOW (Eng.)			Reg. III/1 or MEOL(Y) a)	1	Reg. III/1 or MEOL(Y) a)	1			0
YR(Nav)	Reg. VI/1 or Yacht Rating CoP	2	Reg. VI/1 or Yacht Rating CoP	2	Reg. II/4 or NWR CoP	2	Reg. II/4 or NWR CoP	Reg. II/4 or NWR CoP	3
		5		7		7			8

#### Special requirements or conditions (if any) for Tables 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3

- Maybe dual deck/engine role provided that the officer taking the dual role is suitably qualified in both disciplines and that the person taking the role is a person other than the Master. In such cases an additional rating will be required.
- Certificate holder is to have attended an approved engine manufacturer's course appropriate to the engine type and power range.

### 4.0 HIGH POWERED YACHTS OF LESS THAN 500 GT

Cook Islands Flag Administration has re-examined its policy in respect of manning on yachts of less than 500 GT, and particularly those with a total propulsion power of 3000 kW or more, on short range operations.

Considering the difficulties for management companies and operators to find suitably qualified engineers to serve onboard the abovementioned type of yacht; and noting that the technological development of the marine engines has reduced the need for the traditional engineer's functions to be carried out onboard, the Administration, when setting the manning levels for the engine department of the above mentioned type of

yachts, will take into account propulsive power of a single engine, when the yacht is fitted with two engines, or the highest powered single engine when the yacht is fitted with more than two engines.

**Conditions for the provisions of this chapter to be applied are:**

- The yacht is less than 500 GT;
- The yacht, when engaged in commercial use, is limited to area of operation of less than 60 NM of a safe haven;
- The yacht maintains UMS class notations, or alternatively:
  - it has full bridge control of main engine manoeuvring;
  - it is fitted with high level bilge alarms in the machinery space;
  - the engine room alarm system, including the fire alarm, is relayed to the accommodation and/or the bridge.
- Engines are under warranty and/or have a valid contract with an authorised engine manufacturer's shore-based assistance;
- The information on board describing routine technical procedures and routine maintenance tasks (user's manual) is easily accessible, and engineers are fully conversant with content;
- Engineers may be required to attend an approved engine manufacturer's course (appropriate to the engine type and power range) as per Cook Islands Manning Tables or as directed by the Administration on a case by case basis.

The provisions of this Chapter are not automatically applied, but they need to be requested by the owner/manager and approved by the Administration.

## **5.0 DAILY CHARTERS**

On a case-by-case basis, the Administration will consider requests for reduction in the total number of crew members and/or for reduction of the qualification of the engine crew complement, in cases where the yacht is engaged in daily charter operations.

**Conditions for the provisions of this chapter to be applied are:**

- The yacht shall be a 'Short Range Yacht' (limited to area of operation of less than 60 NM from a safe haven);
- The maximum period of continuous navigation is not exceeding 12 hours duration;
- The yacht complies with the following:
  - it has full bridge control of main engine manoeuvring;
  - it is fitted with high level bilge alarms in the machinery space;
  - the engine room alarm system, including the fire alarm, is relayed to the accommodation and/or the bridge;
- the yacht shall have a valid engine maintenance agreement with the engine makers (or their approved service station), or a similar document to this effect is in place.



This Section will not be automatically applicable. Specific requests need to be made when an application for a Minimum Safe Manning Document is submitted.

In case of clarification, or different manning levels from those aforementioned, the Owners, Technical Managers, and Agents may contact the Regulatory, Technical and Operations (RTO) Department of the Cook Islands Flag Administration at [technical@maritimecookislands.com](mailto:technical@maritimecookislands.com).