



CIRCULAR NO.1-2022/MARITIME SAFETY

3 JANUARY 2022

This Circular serves to provide regular information on maritime safety.

The Solomon Islands Maritime Authority (SIMA) Act 2018, the Shipping Act 1998 as amended and their subsidiary laws prescribe obligations, rights and standards for all registered vessels on any voyage and in any waters, and to every vessel in Solomon Islands waters to any vessel on which Solomon Islands seamen are employed.

FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF SHIPPING OPERATIONS AND SAFETY

The Shipping Act 1998 as amended gives force of law and full effect to international recognized standards such as the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) 1974, the International Load Line convention (LOAD LINE) 1966, International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) 1978, and the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) 1972.

Subsidiary laws (regulations and maritime orders) prescribe standards that apply to all vessels creating the same level-playing field in Solomon Islands. These laws can be found at: <https://www.sima.gov.sb/acts-regulations/>.

The Department of Shipping Operations and Safety at SIMA is responsible for verifying that all acts and regulations are applied:

- **Flag State implementation (FSI):** verification of applicable standards on board registered vessels flying Solomon Islands flag and ensuring safe manning of vessels and qualification of Solomon Islands seafarers.
- **Port State Control (PSC):** verification that international standards from conventions Solomon Islands is a party to are applied on board foreign-flagged vessels.

SIMA leverage fees, charges and levies. The new regime for 2022 is published. Please visit: <https://www.sima.gov.sb/fees-charges-levies-new/>

DID YOU KNOW?

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR SURVEYS & INSPECTIONS OF VESSELS REGISTERED IN SOLOMON ISLANDS?

The Shipping (Non Convention Vessel Safety) Regulations 2006 provide for the survey and inspection of vessels registered in Solomon islands. Shipowners/operators and master must understand the requirements and submit their vessel to mandatory surveys and inspections according to the anniversary date stated in the Vessel Safety Certificate (VSC).

The anniversary date is the day and month of the expire date of the VSC.

For example, the VSC's is 1 July 2025. The following surveys and inspections are mandatory:

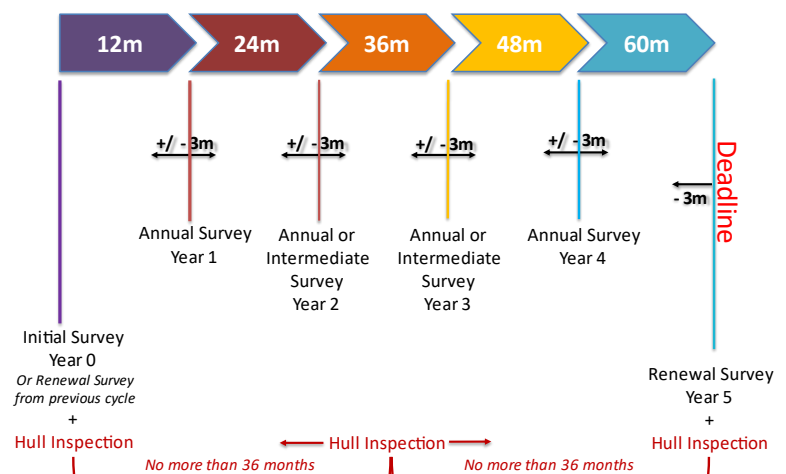
- 1 April < Annual/Intermediate Surveys < 1 October
- 1 April 2025 < Renewal Survey < 1 July 2025

Shipping Act s. 57 states that:

- it is an obligation for a vessel to hold a valid VSC), and
- it is an offence for a master to take and a shipowner to send a vessel to sea without valid VSC.

The absence of VSC or survey within the timeframe is a major non conformity leading to detention of the vessel by SIMA.

Nature & periodicity of surveys/inspections



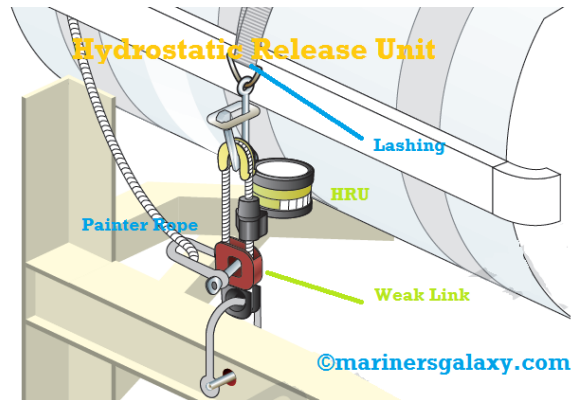
FROM THE SIMA WORKSHOP WITH SHIPOWNERS/OPERATORS ON 9-10 DECEMBER 2021

A very interactive workshop was held on 9-10 December 2021 with shipowners/operators with excellent feedback and outcome that can be consulted at: <https://www.sima.gov.sb/meetings/> and all presentations downloaded.

From the feedback and request for clarification the below measures will be applied by SIMA in 2022:

SHIP SAFETY

- From 1 January 2022, every Inflatable life raft, inflated rescue boat and hydrostatic release unit shall be serviced at intervals of **not more than 12 months** at an approved servicing station. However, this **period can be extended to 15 months** to accommodate with the service of the vessel and the availability of the service station.
- On board vessels, the life raft(s) shall be always placed in their dedicated cradle/rack, adequately lashed with the painter rope connected to the hydrostatic release unit as shown.
- **SIMA can conduct surveys/inspections during weekends in special circumstances**, upon formal request from the shipowner/operators on reasons and agreement to bear extra costs for overtime. Special circumstances are:
 - ✓ the survey/inspection requires travel of vessel inspectors and travel arrangements are such that it is impossible to have the survey/inspection during weekdays unless significant extra costs for the ship owner/operator,
 - ✓ a special inspection is requested to verify deficiencies after a periodic survey that was scheduled and carried out by SIMA within the normal survey/inspection window – *this excludes cases of periodic survey after detention due to overdue survey/inspection*,
 - ✓ vessel inspectors are available for work during the weekend as per the approved inspection timetable, and
 - ✓ shipowner/operator is charged for overtime of SIMA inspectors on top of the annual survey fees – charges are applied as per applicable regulations based on published hourly rate.



Source: <https://marinersgalaxy.com/what-is-hydrostatic-release-unit-in/>

SAFE MANNING

- When departing Solomon Islands ports, all domestic vessels shall have their safe manning in compliance to the Shipping 1998 as amended and the Shipping (STCW Convention) Regulations 2010, namely:
 - ✓ a **valid Safe Manning Certificate (SMC)** covering the type of voyages and prescribing the number and qualification of crew members,
 - ✓ a **crew list signed by the master** and deposited at the office of SIMA before each voyage; for vessels authorised to carry passengers, a passenger manifest together with crew list,
 - ✓ each crew member on the crew list should have an **employment agreement signed** by the concerned seafarer and by the shipowner/operators and approved by the Director SIMA, and
 - ✓ each crew member has his/her **valid certificate of competency** that has been revalidated within in last 5 years of the issuance or previous revalidation date.

Conditions for the revalidation of seafarer certificates:

1. valid Medical Fitness Certificate
2. approved seagoing services appropriate to certificate held (in seafarer record book)
3. served onboard at least 1 year within the 5-year period
4. successfully completed an approved short or long* refresher courses at the Maritime Academy (provide transcript)
5. SIMA application form properly filled, and fees paid.

*depending on onboard training within the 5-year period

CONTACT

All shipowners/operators are encouraged to provide feedback on this circular to the SIMA's Department of Shipping Operations and Safety to improve safety of all at sea, clean seas, and vibrant maritime industry in Solomon Islands.

For anything related to maritime safety, please contact Jonah Mitau, Manager Shipping Operations and Safety at jonah.mitau@sima.gov.sb or visit SIMA's website at: <https://www.sima.gov.sb/>.