



# Fact Sheet

## Ship and Yacht Registration in Belize

As a fully licensed international financial services provider in Belize, BOSL can assist with a full range of ship and yacht registration services in Belize.

### **ADVANTAGES OF REGISTERING IN BELIZE:**

- Same day registrations are available
- No restrictions on nationality, type, class or size of the vessel
- Can obtain provisional or permanent status
- Dual registrations are allowed
- No requirement to have a local crew

If you have all the required documents at hand, you can apply immediately for the permanent registration, which is valid for five years.

If the documentation for the permanent registration is not readily available, you can obtain a provisional registration, which is valid for 6 months. Before the expiration of the provisional registration, you are expected to gather all necessary documents for the permanent registration or your registration may be cancelled.

### **FEES:**

Our fees are very competitive and cover the processing of all applications and liaising with IMMARBEL – the International Merchant Marine Registry of Belize – as follows:

Application Processing Fee	US \$250.00
Administration & Miscellaneous Expenses	US \$200.00
Providing Ship's or Yacht's Agent in Belize	US \$250.00 (per year)
<b>TOTAL FEES</b>	<b>US \$700.00</b>

Plus fees due to IMMARBEL after review of vessel type (see Fee Request Form).  
Any other work done will be charged at the rate of US\$150.00 per hour.

**Note:** The above does not include fees for transportation, communication, notarization of documents and overseas courier packages.



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### **SHIPOWNER ELIGIBILITY:**

There are no requirements concerning local ownership or participation in ownership.

### **PROVISIONAL REGISTRATION:**

In accordance with The Registration of Merchant Ships Act 1989, as amended by Act No. 5 of 1996, a provisional registration is valid for six months. During this time, the shipowner or his representative is expected to gather all documents necessary for permanent registration.

The following documentation is required:

- Request for confirmation of availability of vessel's name.
- Application for Registration of Ships form duly completed and signed by the applicant. One application for each vessel is required. This application includes the necessary information for the issuance of a Provisional Ship Station License.
- Proof of Ownership in the form of a Bill of Sale, Auction Document or Builder's Certificate.
- Power of Attorney appointing a shipping agent in Belize.
- Valid Cargo Ship Safety Radio Certificate in compliance with GMDSS Code (where applicable).
- International Tonnage Certificate (where applicable).
- Proof of compliance with ISM Code-Copy of Document of Compliance and Safety Management Certificate (where applicable).
- Application for Minimum Safe Manning Certificate.
- Letter of confirmation from an authorized radio accounting entity undertaking the payment of vessel's radio accounts.
- Applications for the Endorsements of Licenses for all officers.

For provisional registration, the abovementioned documents may be scanned and submitted by email to [orders@bosl.com](mailto:orders@bosl.com).

Vessels under construction may be granted provisional registration under special conditions.

A Provisional Patent of Navigation and a Provisional Ship Station License may be obtained from IMMARBE's Head Office or from one of the Registry's Designated Offices worldwide. BOSL can assist in this process and deal with all documentation on your behalf.



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### **AGE LIMIT:**

With effect from 1st March 2005, the age limit guideline for new Registrations was reduced from 30 years to 25 years for all vessels except yachts, fishing vessels, non-propelled barges, special registrations and new registrations which are immediately chartered out. At the discretion of the Registry, the age limit of 25 years may be exceeded in exceptional circumstances based on the vessel's detention record, the ship owner/operator's record, the area of intended operation, the intended trade, and provided it is classed with an IACS Recognized Organization.

### **PERMANENT REGISTRATION:**

Permanent Registration can be effected at any time during the provisional registration period upon submission of the necessary documentation together with the applicable fees.

The following additional documentation is required:

- Original or certified true copy of a duly notarized Bill of Sale, Judicial Sale Instrument or Builder Certificate.
- Original Deletion Certificate from previous registry.
- Original or certified true copy of the Power of Attorney appointing a shipping agent in Belize.
- Copies of all valid statutory certificates issued by a Recognized Organization on behalf of the Government of Belize, including the ITC, DOC, SMC, ILLC, CSSRC, etc.
- Application form for Maritime Ship Station License duly completed.
- International Tonnage Certificate issued by a Recognized Organization on behalf of the Government of Belize (where applicable).
- Copies of Document of Compliance and Safety Management Certificate issued by a recognized organization on behalf of the Government of Belize (where applicable).

All documents submitted must be in the English language or, if they are in a foreign language, they must be accompanied by an official translation thereof.

If an original is to be submitted, a notary public or other recognized and authorized public official must certify the authenticity of the signature(s) that appear(s) on the document as well as the authority of the person(s) executing the document.

If a photocopy is to be submitted, a notary public or other recognized and authorized public official must certify the authenticity of the signature(s) that appear on the document as well



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as the authority of the person(s) executing the document, and must certify that the document is a true copy of its original.

### **SPECIAL REGISTRATIONS:**

IMMARBE also accepts vessels to be registered for a short period under special circumstances such as one delivery voyage for scrap. Procedures for special registration allow for documents to be issued with a validity of three months and automatic expiration when this period elapses. This special status does not entitle the vessel to a Deletion Certificate.

### **Registration of vessels of 7501 GT and above:**

New quality criteria were introduced with effect from 1st November 2001. Basically the same procedure for registration is followed as for vessels up to 7500 GT except that:

- All applicants must confirm that they have Third Party Liability Insurance Cover e.g. P&I cover.
- Applications must be accompanied by a copy of the ISM Document of Compliance as well as a copy of the Safety Management Certificate or Confirmation from the Recognized Organization that the company is in the process of attaining certification of the latter.
- Permanent status does not require renewal every 5 years.
- Only vessels classed with IACS may be accepted.
- Certificate of Deletion from previous Registry or permission to transfer or delete or other proof of consent to transfer Registry from current Registry is required.

### **Fishing Vessels:**

The registration of fishing vessels is additionally subject to the provisions of the High Seas Fishing Act, 2003. The requirements include the completion of an Application form for a License to Fish on the High Seas as well as the installation of a Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) utilizing INMARSAT C or INMARSAT Mini C or INMARSAT D+. Fishing vessels which land their catch at ports of member States of the European Union are required to pass a special sanitary inspection in compliance with the relevant EU/EC Directives.

Fishing vessels are also subject to the international and regional regulations applicable to the area of fishing which are implemented by Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) such as ICCAT, as well as by bilateral or multilateral agreements for the protection of certain areas or endangered marine species. Currently, Belize is:



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- A Contracting Party of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT).
- A Contracting Party of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC).
- A Cooperating Non-Contracting Party of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC). It will become a Contracting Party latest by when the IATTC “Antigua Convention” comes into force which is expected to be in 2009.
- A Cooperating Non-Contracting Party of North East Atlantic Fisheries Commissions (NEAFC).

All Belize registered vessels which are licensed to target tuna or tuna-like species in the Convention areas of the abovementioned Commissions are listed in their respective Regional Vessel Registers.

### **ENDORSEMENT OF OFFICERS’ CERTIFICATES:**

Belize was placed on the IMO STCW White List in November 2001. Also, the IMO’s Maritime Safety Committee has confirmed that in accordance with Regulation 1/8 of the STCW 1978 Convention, it has received the required independent evaluation which demonstrates that Belize is giving full and complete effect to the aforementioned Convention. The procedures for issuance of such Endorsements by IMMARBE are based on equivalence, requiring evidence that the applicant is in possession of an appropriate, recognized and valid certificate from a country that is on the IMO White List.

### **THE GENERAL SAFETY INSPECTION PROGRAMME (Flag State Inspection):**

All vessels registered at IMMARBE are subject to a safety inspection in order to ensure compliance with the national and international regulations. For this purpose an Inspection Fee is charged in the Annual Fees collected for each vessel. The inspection programme contemplates an annual General Safety Inspection, but the Administration may order a re-inspection or a special inspection when it is considered necessary.

The General Safety Inspections can only be performed by inspectors who are authorized by IMMARBE for this purpose. They are paid directly by IMMARBE’s Head Office. Each inspection is co-coordinated by the Head Office.

### **RECORDING OF DOCUMENTS:**

The recording of title deeds, mortgages, liens and encumbrances or any other assignments relating to any registered vessel is governed by the Merchant Shipping Act and may be requested through any Designated Office. Recording of documents may be either:



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- Preliminary recording; or
- Permanent recording

The preliminary recording of documents may be effected either by the Head Office or by any of the Designated Offices on the basis of an application submitted to the latter and forwarded to the Head Office for the records entry.

The preliminary recording of documents is valid for six calendar months and has the same legal effect as permanent recording. In the event that the permanent recording is not accomplished prior to the expiration of this period, the preliminary recording will lapse.

The permanent recording of documents may be requested at any time within the six months validity of the preliminary recording or immediately if all necessary documents are to hand.

Should the documents for recording be in a language other than English, they must be accompanied by a notarized official translation into English. After completion of the procedures, a Certificate of Recording will be produced by IMMARBE and delivered to the applicant.

The recording of the vessel's ownership title is required for the completion of the vessel's registration as well as for the recording of mortgages, liens or encumbrances upon the vessel.



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### PRIVATE YACHTS

#### ELIGIBILITY:

Any person or body corporate of any nationality may apply for the registration of a yacht in Belize.

#### REGISTRATION:

This may be a provisional or permanent registration, however, the owner may wish to proceed with permanent registration from the outset provided all applicable requirements are met.

#### PROVISIONAL REGISTRATION:

Provisional Registration is valid for up to six months and compliance with the following is required:

- Completed application form for registration.
- Completed application form for maritime ship station license.
- A copy of an official document providing ownership, in the form of a Bill of Sale, Previous Certificate of Registry, Builder's Certificate, Court Auction Document or Memorandum of Agreement, accompanied by the Protocol of Delivery and Acceptance (Part C, Section 1).
- Copy of vessel's deletion certificate from the previous Registry or permission to transfer or delete or consent to transfer Registry from the current Registry.
- A power of attorney appointing a shipping agent in Belize must be submitted. Shipping Agents in Belize act as an "assured communication link with owners" in accordance with the requirements of the Registration of Merchant Shipping Act as well as the provisions of Article 10(2) of the U.N. Convention on the Conditions of Registration of Ships.
- Declaration concerning the vessel's intended use (commercial or private) as well as the area of operation. Such declaration can be issued on a company letterheaded paper and signed by the owner, operator or their manager. It is an offence under IMMARB's Disciplinary Regulations to register a yacht as private yacht when it is in fact in commercial use.
- Details of the authorized Recognized Organization or individual Surveyor who will be responsible for surveying the yacht on behalf of our Administration and the issuance of the relevant certificates.





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- Appointment of an authorized Radio Accounting Authority as listed on [www.immarbe.com/recorg.html](http://www.immarbe.com/recorg.html) for the settlement of vessel's radio accounts.
- ISM & ISPS forms (where applicable).
- Evidence of Hull, Machinery and Third Party Limited Liability Insurance Cover.
- The Manning and Personnel Certification as well as the Survey, Certification, Inspection requirements.
- Payment of the respective registration fees which are shown on [www.immarbe.com/yachts/taxesfees.html](http://www.immarbe.com/yachts/taxesfees.html).

### **PERMANENT REGISTRATION:**

The following is a list of documents which must be submitted for the permanent registration of a yacht which is already registered provisionally.

- Original or certified true copy of a duly notarized Bill of Sale.
- Original or certified true copy of a duly notarized Power of Attorney executed by owner thereby appointing a Shipping Agent in Belize.
- Original copy of the Deletion certificate from previous Registry.
- Copies of all certificates issued on behalf of IMMARBEL.

Yachts which are proceeding directly for permanent registration must submit all the documents listed under Provisional Registration and where applicable the originals as opposed to copies of the documents listed under Permanent Registration.

All documents must be in the English language or, if not in English, accompanied by an English translation thereof.

N.B: It is a condition of registration that all yachts should comply with the national legislation and regulations of each State in whose territorial waters they operate.

### **INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS:**

Every commercial yacht should hold hull and machinery insurance for the yacht itself and any other equipment carried thereon e.g. jet skis etc. Also it should have third party liability insurance including cover for all persons who are part of the yacht's complement onboard and in respect of any sporting activities in which any persons onboard will engage. Evidence of cover will be required at the time of provisional/permanent registration.





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These insurance requirements are also strongly recommended for private yachts.

### **Free Confidential Consultation:**

For a free confidential no-obligation consultation to see if BOSL can assist you and your company, please contact:

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