

SHIP REGISTRATION

- All types of vessels, from pleasure yachts to oil rigs, including vessels under construction, may be registered under the Malta flag, provided that, inter alia, they are wholly owned by legally constituted corporate bodies or entities irrespective of nationality, or by European Union citizens. A Maltese ship may also be bareboat charter registered under another flag.
- There are neither trading restrictions nor age restrictions. However:
 - Ships of 15 years and over, but under 20 years, have to undergo an inspection by an authorised flag state inspector before or within a month of provisional registration;
 - Ships of 20 years and over but less than 25 years, have to be inspected by an authorised flag state inspector prior to being provisionally registered.
 - As a rule trading ships of 25 years and over are not registered.
- The procedure for the registration of a vessel is relatively straightforward. Provisional registration, which in terms of the law has the same effect as the so-called Permanent registration, can be affected very quickly. Authority to register a ship, however, will only be given once the Administration is satisfied that the vessel conforms to all the standards required by the relative international conventions.
- Provisional registration has a validity of six months, although this can be extended by a further six months; by this time all the documentation has to be completed for permanent registration. This includes, in particular, evidence of ownership and of cancellation of former registry. Authority to operate still remains linked to conformity with the relative manning, safety and pollution prevention international standards.
- The principal requirements for provisional registration are the following :
 - An application for registration by the owner or an authorised representative accompanied, if required, by an application for a change of name;
 - A copy of the ship's International Tonnage Certificate, where applicable;
 - Proof of qualification to own a Maltese ship; in the case of a body corporate, the document of incorporation;
 - In the case of non-Maltese owners, appointment of a resident agent;

- A declaration of ownership made before the Registrar by the owner or an authorised representative;
 - Evidence of seaworthiness; in the case of trading vessels, confirmation of class;
 - Payment of initial and annual registration fees.
- Documents to be submitted during provisional registration:
 - A builder's certificate, if the vessel has not been registered elsewhere; otherwise a bill of sale or any other document showing evidence of title of ship;
 - A cancellation of registry certificate from the last country of registry, showing vessel to be free from encumbrances or otherwise;
 - A Certificate of Survey and a copy of the International Tonnage Certificate certifying that the vessel has been surveyed in accordance with Maltese regulations;
 - Evidence that the vessel has been marked in accordance with the law i.e: a duly completed and signed Carving and Marking Note;

In the case of SOLAS ships, copy of the last updated Continuous Synopsis Record (CSR) issued by the vessel's previous flag where the ship was last documented (*not applicable in the case of new buildings*).

Malta – A Guide to Ship Registration – <http://www.transport.gov.mt/admin/uploads/media-library/files/Reg%20Note%20-%20Merchant%202013.pdf>