



Revision No:

1.0

Issue Date:

09 Oct 2025

Effective Date:

09 Oct 2025

## Notice to: Shipowners, Operators, Officers, Flag State Inspectors and Recognised Organisations.

### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 This Marine Circular is issued by the Barbados Maritime Ship Registry to provide guidelines to Appointed Nautical Inspectors (ANI) for conducting operational checks and safety drills during flag Inspections.
- 1.2 This is not intended to limit or restrict the professional judgment of the ANI or the scope of the inspection to be carried out.
- 1.3 This Marine Circular is based on the Paris MoU "[Guidance on Procedures for operational controls](#)".

### 2. Scope

- 2.1 Safety drills, including fire drills, shall be carried out as realistically as possible, simulating an actual emergency to ensure that the crew is fully familiarised, prepared and capable of responding effectively.
- 2.2 The general assessment of any drill shall include:
  - .1 **Training:** Confirm that the crew have hands-on experience using lifesaving, firefighting or other relevant equipment and have sufficiently trained their roles in an emergency.
  - .2 **Familiarisation:** Ensure that all crew members know their specific duties, responsibilities, and the location of their assigned lifeboats or life rafts.
  - .3 **Confidence:** Confirm that the crew are confident in the effectiveness of the safety equipment and procedures, which will reduce panic during a real emergency.
  - .4 **Teamwork:** Evaluate the cooperation and communication among crew members during the drill.

### 3. Conduct of Drills

- 3.1 The ANI shall conduct **at least two** of the following drills during every flag Inspection, except the pre-registration inspection:
  - .1 Fire drill;
  - .2 Abandon ship drill;
  - .3 SOPEP/SMPEP drill;
  - .4 Man Overboard (MOB) drill
  - .5 Enclosed space entry and rescue drill;
  - .6 Emergency steering drill;
  - .7 Any other Drill as appropriate.

## 3.2 General Procedures for Drills:

- .1 Upon arrival on board, the master and senior officers shall be informed about the intended drills to be carried out;
- .2 Before the drill, the ANI shall check the records of the crew's last participation in emergency drills on board. The documentary evidence of the crew members' familiarisation with the relevant STCW training shall be checked;
- .3 The locations and methods of the drills, such as fire, man-over-board (MOB), or enclosed space entry drills, shall be agreed with the master subject to his discretion. The master shall be instructed to notify the crew that a drill will be performed, but shall not reveal the specific type or location where the emergency is simulated, as this could affect the realism and accuracy of evaluating the crew's response;
- .4 If passengers are on board, they should be informed about the drill through public announcements;
- .5 During the drill, the ANI shall question crew members at random, to evaluate their safety awareness on board the vessel.

## 3.3 Precautions:

- .1 The ANI shall not request any drill or activity that, in the Master's judgment, could endanger the vessel, crew, passengers, or cargo;
- .2 When requesting a drill, the ANI should, as far as possible, avoid disrupting normal shipboard operations such as cargo or ballast handling, and the drills should not cause unnecessary delay to the vessel;
- .3 Drills should be carried out at a safe and controlled pace. Everyone involved shall understand their duties and how to use the equipment safely. If unsafe practices are observed, or if a real emergency occurs, the ANI shall instruct the Master to stop the drill immediately;
- .4 The ANI should create and control the scenario to achieve the most realistic results, as this keeps some level of uncertainty for the crew and reflects real-life conditions in a better way;
- .5 It is recommended that ANIs wear high-visibility vests to distinguish themselves from crew members during the drill;
- .6 Clear communication between the ANI and crew is essential. Drills may be divided into stages, such as:
  - i) Stage I: Incident - A fire report or alarm received on the bridge
  - ii) Stage II: Fire Drill
  - iii) Stage III: Abandon Ship Drill

## 3.4 Observing Drills:

- .1 The ANI shall assess whether the drill is acceptable based on three key principles: command, control, and communication, while keeping notes as necessary;
- .2 When observing a drill, the ANI(s) should confirm the following:
  - i) The crew are following the instructions given in the muster list;
  - ii) That there are enough crew members assigned to each duty or team to handle their responsibilities properly;
  - iii) Effective communication - between the teams, their leaders, and the Bridge (or command centre)
  - iv) Effective teamwork — observe and question their actions as necessary;
  - v) The ANI should note the time taken for the teams to assemble and their reaction time;
  - vi) That the equipment used in the drill works properly, including fire alarms, fire doors, personal firefighting gear, atmosphere testing instruments, etc.;
  - vii) The crew's overall response time is quick enough, considering the size of the vessel, location of the fire, the number of available personnel and the equipment on hand.
- .3 According to SOLAS standards:
  - i) Lifeboats and survival crafts shall always be in a state of readiness so that preparation for embarkation and launching can be completed in less than 5 minutes by two crew members (for vessels built after 1 July 1986);
  - ii) Lifeboats shall be fully boarded within 3 minutes on cargo vessels.

## 4. Standard Scenarios

- 4.1 The scenario should start by choosing a high-risk area appropriate for the drill, such as the engine room, galley, or electrical rooms. The drill scenarios shall be made as realistic as practicable.
- 4.2 Fire Drill:
- i) The fire drill should be carried out in a suitable location, with realistic conditions such as simulated casualties, smoke, and potential hazards as far as practicable;
  - ii) The ANI should observe the crew's performance in firefighting, communication, and safety procedures, including alarm activation, evacuation, ventilation control, use of equipment, and casualty handling.
- 4.3 Abandon Ship Drill:
- i) Confirm that the escape routes are unobstructed and that muster stations are clearly marked;
  - ii) The ANI should ensure lifeboat drills demonstrate donning of lifejackets, testing of engine and steering, operation of davits and manoeuvring of at least one boat;
  - iii) The drill shall be carried out in a safe manner, and procedures involving unnecessary high risk shall be avoided;
  - iv) The number of crew members boarding the lifeboat shall be the minimum required at the master's discretion;
  - v) Confirm that the team lowering the lifeboats is proficient and that the lifeboats are launched in safe conditions with the necessary permissions from the port authorities. Extra care shall be taken with free-fall lifeboats, and free-fall launching shall be avoided; a simulated launch may be carried out instead.
- 4.4 SOPEP/SMPEP drill:
- i) The ANI shall confirm that the officers and crew members are familiar with their duties as per the Shipboard Oil Pollution Emergency Plan (SOPEP) and Shipboard Marine Pollution Emergency Plan (SMPEP);
  - ii) The use of the SOPEP/SMPEP equipment shall be demonstrated as far as practicable.
- 4.5 Man Overboard (MOB) drill:
- i) This drill may only be performed if conditions permit and at the discretion of the master, as the full exercise is best carried out at sea while underway;
  - ii) The drill may still be simulated to the maximum extent possible, and communications, response times and the deployment of equipment, including the rescue boat davit and engine, shall be evaluated.
- 4.6 Enclosed space entry and rescue drill:
- i) The drill evaluates the safe execution of enclosed space entry and rescue procedures, based on realistic scenarios agreed with the master;
  - ii) It verifies hazard identification, proper safety briefings, permit compliance, and the correct use of personal protective and communication equipment;
  - iii) The drill also verifies that the atmospheric testing equipment is properly calibrated and functional, and confirms that the rescue equipment is in good condition and ready for use.
- 4.7 Emergency steering drill:
- i) The ANI shall check records that the emergency steering procedures are carried out at least once every three months;
  - ii) The ANI shall develop a realistic emergency scenario for the drill, in coordination with the master;
  - iii) During the exercise, the ANI shall verify that the crew are fully familiar with the emergency steering procedures, including direct control of steering from the steering compartment, proper communications and the use of alternative power sources.
- 4.8 Further details and guidance can be found in the Paris MoU "Guidance on Procedures for operational controls".

### 5. Drill Assessment and Reporting

- 5.1 Upon completion of drills, the ANI shall review the entire exercise, including the debriefing conducted by the master and senior officers. Findings and any necessary corrective actions should be discussed. If operational deficiencies are significant, drills may be repeated until the ANI is satisfied.
- 5.2 The ANI shall take a video of all the drills carried out and be in the frame of at least one of the drills. All videos and inspection reports shall be forwarded to the Ops department.
- 5.3 If, in the professional judgment of the ANI, the drill performance is deemed highly unsatisfactory and the crew are unable to implement corrective measures, the ANI shall consult the BMSR Operations Department to determine appropriate actions. All observations and identified deficiencies shall be formally documented in the FSI report.

### 6. Validity

- 6.1 The validity of this circular is until withdrawn or superseded.

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Operations Department

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