

Notes for Holders of Operating Licence of Local Vessels

1. The operating licence is subject to the provisions of the Merchant Shipping (Local Vessels) Ordinance (Cap. 548) and the regulations made thereunder.
2. The operating licence shall be kept on board the vessel and shall on request by an authorized officer be produced for inspection. Please refer to section 42 of the Merchant Shipping (Local Vessels) (Certification and Licensing) Regulation (Cap. 548D) for details.
3. The Shipping Legislation (Electronic Certificates and Electronic Documents) (Amendment) Bill 2024 has come into effect since 5 July 2024. The owner(s) applying for renewal of their operating licence is/are required to provide a valid email address to receive their electronic certificates.
4. If the existing paper-form operating licence is lost, destructed or defaced, the owner shall apply in writing to the Director of Marine for an e-Certificate (with effective from 5 July 2024). Subject to the satisfaction of the Director of Marine and on payment of the prescribed fee, an e-certificate will be issued and the existing paper-form certificate shall cease to have effect. The loss of existing paper-form operating licence shall be reported at once to a Police Station. The lost existing paper-form operating licence shall be returned to the Marine Department as soon as it is found. Please refer to section 54 of the Merchant Shipping (Local Vessels) (Certification and Licensing) Regulation (Cap. 548D) for details.
5. It is the duty of the owner of the vessel to apply for a renewal of the operating licence when the operating licence expires. The owner may apply for renewal of the operating licence within two months before the expiry date. In case of vessel required to be surveyed, the certificate of survey and other relevant certificate(s) of the vessel should be valid. During renewal of the operating licence, the owner will be required to produce the following documents of the vessel. (Application for renewal without change of particulars can be sent by post.)
 - (i) Completed application form [Form No.: MD 509];
 - (ii) The original identity card/certificate of corporation and valid business registration certificate of all owner(s) or its certified true copy if the owner(s) is/are not applying in person;
 - (iii) If the owner authorized another person to collect the renewed operating licence for his / her behalf, the authorized person is required to produce his / her original identity card;
 - (iv) A copy of valid third party risks insurance certificate;
 - (v) Proof of address by a correspondence (dated within the recent 6 months) showing the owner's name and address (if the owner is a registered company, its certified true copy of valid business registration certificate may be used as address proof.);
 - (vi) A copy of valid third party risks insurance certificate;
 - (vii) The appropriate licence fee as prescribed under the Merchant Shipping (Local Vessels) (Fees) Regulation. Payment by cheque should be crossed and made payable to "The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region"
6. The vessel shall keep on board the life-saving appliances, fire-fighting apparatus and radio equipment as prescribed in the certificate of survey. In case of vessels not required to be surveyed, she shall keep on board those appliances in accordance with the Merchant Shipping (Local Vessels) (Safety and Survey) Regulation (Cap. 548G) or the relevant code of practice. Please refer to the relevant appendix of these notes for details.

7. The vessel shall keep on board the lights, shapes and sound signals in accordance with the requirement prescribed in the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea 1972, the Merchant Shipping (Local Vessels) Ordinance (Cap. 548) and its subsidiary legislation or code of practice. In case of vessels not required to be surveyed, please refer to the relevant appendix of these notes for details.
8. The safety equipment like life-saving appliances, fire-fighting apparatus, radio equipment, lights, shapes and sound signals kept on board shall be: -
 - (i) sufficient to protect and ensure the safety of the persons and property on board the vessel;
 - (ii) properly maintained and regularly inspected;
 - (iii) in good and serviceable condition; and
 - (iv) fit for the service intended.
9. When the vessel is in use, there should be qualified person(s) who hold(s) a valid local certificate of competency as coxswain / and engine operator / pleasure vessel operator (if applicable) on board. Please refer to section 47 of the Merchant Shipping (Local Vessels) (Certification and Licensing) Regulation (Cap. 548D) for details.
10. The vessel shall not carry more than the number of person(s) permitted to carry under the operating licence. Please refer to section 14 of the Merchant Shipping (Local Vessels) Ordinance (Cap. 548) for details.
11. The vessel having an assigned summer load line or freeboard mark shall not be loaded to the condition that the assigned summer load line or freeboard mark is submerged. Please refer to section 94 of the Merchant Shipping (Local Vessels) (General) Regulation (Cap. 548F) for details.
12. The International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea 1972 shall in all respects be duly complied with and observed by the vessel. Please refer to section 27 of the Merchant Shipping (Local Vessels) Ordinance (Cap. 548) for details.
13. Except with the permission of the Director of Marine, the vessel shall not be used for towing. Please refer to section 93 of the Merchant Shipping (Local Vessels) (General) Regulation (Cap. 548F) for details.
14. (a) Except with the permission of the Director of Marine, the vessel with length overall exceeding 50 metres shall not enter or remain in any typhoon shelter except Hei Ling Chau Typhoon Shelter. In case of vessels with length overall exceeding 30.4 metres, they shall not enter or remain in the following typhoon shelters except with the permission of the Director of Marine: -

Aberdeen South Typhoon Shelter	Aberdeen West Typhoon Shelter
Causeway Bay Typhoon Shelter	Sam Ka Tsuen Typhoon Shelter
Shau Kei Wan Typhoon Shelter	Shuen Wan Typhoon Shelter
Yim Tin Tsai Typhoon Shelter	
- (b) Except with the permission of the Director of Marine, the vessel with length overall exceeding 75 metres shall not enter or remain in any typhoon shelter.

Please refer to section 4 of the Merchant Shipping (Local Vessels) (Typhoon Shelters) Regulation (Cap. 548E) for details.

15. Where the vessel is involved in a collision with another vessel, a port facility or other property, the vessel sinks or becomes stranded or disabled, a person is killed or seriously injured as a result of an accident, an explosion or fire on board the vessel, damage is caused by the vessel to port facility or other property, or a person, cargo or equipment is lost overboard, the owner, his agent or the coxswain shall report the occurrence forthwith to the Director of Marine orally, by means of signals, or in writing and shall furnish to the Director of Marine in writing full particulars thereof within 24 hours after the occurrence. Please refer to section 57 of the Merchant Shipping (Local Vessels) Ordinance (Cap. 548) for details.
16. The vessel shall not occupy an area of the waters of Hong Kong for its use exclusively. Please refer to section 41 of Merchant Shipping (Local Vessels) (Certification and Licensing) Regulation (Cap. 548D) for details.
17. The vessel shall not remain stationary in an area of the waters of Hong Kong unless its full licence, temporary licence or permission for a laid-up vessel permits it to do so. Please refer to section 41 of Merchant Shipping (Local Vessels) (Certification and Licensing) Regulation (Cap. 548D) for details.
18. The vessel shall have no right to occupy or claim any anchorage, part of seabed or seawall or adjacent land.
19. A Class IV vessel shall not be used otherwise than -
 - (a) by the owner exclusively for pleasure purposes; or
 - (b) if it has been let to any person, by that person exclusively for pleasure purposes.

Please refer to section 6 of Merchant Shipping (Local Vessels) (Certification and Licensing) Regulation (Cap. 548D) for details.