
Circular 2020/001

Authorized Service Providers

Date: 20-02-2020

To whom it may concern,

This BMI circular provides requirements of the Belgian Maritime Inspectorate (BMI) on the use of Authorized service providers as required by SOLAS Regulation 20 of Chapter III, as amended following the adoption of Resolution MSC.402(96) and Res.404(96) by the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

This BMI Circular is valid for maintenance, thorough examination, operational testing, overhaul and repair of:

1. lifeboats (including free-fall lifeboats), rescue boats (including fast rescue boats), and
2. launching appliances, and release gear.

This is not applicable for the examination of liferafts, lifejackets and other lifesaving appliances.

A. Original equipment manufacturers

1. Manufacturers

When acting as service provider for their own equipment, original equipment manufacturers (OEM) are not required to be authorized. However, their personnel need to be certified.

When acting as a service provider for servicing equipment that is not its own, a manufacturer is to be considered as a service provider which must be authorized for the specific mark and type of this equipment (see B).

2. Original equipment manufacturers no longer in business

In cases where an OEM is no longer in business or no longer provides technical support the BMI may issue, on case by case basis, authorization for a service provider based on their prior authorization for the equipment and/or long-term experience and demonstrated expertise as an authorized service provider.

For such cases only, the BMI must be informed in writing and the BMI's consent must be obtained prior to the performance of either the annual thorough examinations and operational tests or the five-yearly thorough examinations, overhauls, overload operational tests and repairs. This can be done through the BMI specific email address: Ship.Belflag@mobiliteit.fgov.be.

Applications for a case by case authorization, accompanied by the supporting documentation, will be examined only if they are received from the managing company of the ship.

B. Authorized service provider (ASP)

1. BMI authorized service provider

In case there is no OEM available within a reasonable time frame or reasonable distance, the examination and/or tests have to be done by a service provider authorized by the delegated official of the BMI in accordance with the requirements given in Resolution MSC.402(96).

The updated list with BMI recognised service providers can be found via the following link:

https://mobilit.belgium.be/nl/scheepvaart/erkenning_instellingen/service_providers

2. No BMI authorized service provider available

In case there is no OEM or BMI authorized service provider available within a reasonable time frame or reasonable distance, the examination and/or tests can be carried out by a service provider:

- a. Which has an authorization directly by another EU member State, and not by their RO, or
- b. Which has been authorized by a Belgian Recognised Organisation (RO) (see F).

3. No authorized service provider available

In the exceptional circumstances where no authorized service provider is available for the specific make and type of the equipment, BMI must be contacted: Ship.Belflag@mobilit.fgov.be.

C. Certificate of Authorization

It is the responsibility of the managing company to ensure that servicing, testing and repairs of the equipment listed above, is carried out only by authorized service providers holding a valid Certificate of Authorization. Authorization is limited to each make and type of equipment to be serviced.

The BMI considers an Approval of Service Supplier (AoSS) certificate referring to IACS UR Z17 as amended / Rev.14 as equivalent if it is supplied by a Belgian Recognised Organisation (see F) as IACS UR Z17 Rev.14 corresponds to IMO Resolution MSC.402(96).

Evidence of authorizations shall be made available on board to surveyors.

D. Service personnel

The certification process and programme of service personnel shall comply with requirements of the IMO Resolution MSC.402(96) for each make and type of the equipment for which service is to be provided.

Service personnel shall be individually certified by the OEM or by an Authorized Service Provider for each make and type of the equipment to be worked on, as well as for the specific work activities to be carried out, such as annual or five-yearly inspections. Completion of relevant education and training, including a competence assessment using the equipment for which the personnel are to be certified, is a prerequisite for certification.

E. Annual and five-year thorough examination and operational tests

The thorough examinations and operational test of lifeboats, launching appliances and on-load release gear shall be carried out at the annual surveys required by regulations I/7 or I/8, as applicable. Reference is made to SOLAS Ch III, Reg. 20.11.

Five-yearly thorough examination, any overhaul, overload operational tests and repairs shall be conducted by certified personnel of the OEM or of an authorized service provider. This shall be done in the presence of an RO surveyor and/or a BMI inspector (MSC.1/Crc.1618).

F. Belgian Recognised Organisations

The Belgian Recognised Organisations are:

- American Bureau of Shipping (ABS),
- Bureau Veritas Marine & Offshore SAS (BV),

- DNV GL AS,
 - Lloyd's Register Group Ltd (LR),
 - Nippon Kaiji Kyokai General Incorporated Foundation (Class NKK),
 - Russian Maritime Register of Shipping (RS),
 - RINA Services S.p.A.
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