Companies operating ships under the flag of Antigua and Barbuda.
Seafarers on Antigua and Barbuda ships,
Recognised Organisations conducting statutory certification services on behalf of Antigua and Barbuda.

This Circular was previously published as Circular 002-003-2012. It is re-published as 2012-006 with minor editorial changes.

Background.
Amendments to SOLAS Chapter V, Regulation 19 which were agreed at the 86th Session of the IMO Maritime Safety Committee and contained in Resolution MSC.282(86) require the mandatory carriage of ECDIS in ships to which the Convention applies from certain key dates.

For new ships the requirements apply to:

1. Passenger ships of 500 GT or more and tankers of 3,000 GT or more constructed on or after 1st July 2012.

2. Cargo ships (other than tankers) of 10,000 GT and more constructed on or after 1st July 2013.

3. Cargo ships (other than tankers) of 3,000 GT and more but less than 10,000 GT constructed on or after 1st July 2014.

For existing ships the mandatory carriage of ECDIS is to start from:

1. The first survey (annual, periodical or renewal) on or after 1st July 2014; for passenger ships of 500 GT and more constructed before 1st July 2012.

2. The first survey (annual, periodical or renewal) on or after 1st July 2015; for tankers of 3,000 GT and more constructed before 1st July 2012.

3. The first survey (annual, periodical or renewal) on or after 1st July 2016; for cargo ships (other than tankers) of 50,000 GT and more constructed before 1st July 2013.

4. The first survey (annual, periodical or renewal) on or after 1st July 2017; for cargo ships (other than tankers) of 20,000 GT and more but less than 50,000 GT constructed before 1st July 2013.

5. The first survey (annual, periodical or renewal) on or after 1st July 2018;
    for cargo ships (other than tankers) of 10,000 GT and more but less than 20,000 GT constructed before 1st July 2013.

The previous Circular 02-007-02 on this subject is withdrawn and replaced by this Circular.

Current situation.
SOLAS Chapter V, Regulation 19 requires every ship to carry up to date nautical charts and nautical publications in order to plan and display the ships route for the intended voyage and to plot and monitor positions throughout the voyage. The regulation permits an Electronic Chart Display and Information System (ECDIS) to be used to meet this requirement provided that back-up means are provided (Regulation 19.2.1.5)

Antigua and Barbuda permits the carriage of ECDIS as an alternative to paper charts and as the primary navigation system provided that:

*   The ECDIS is type approved as meeting the IMO Performance Standard (MSC.232(82))
*   It uses up to date chart data issued by or under the authority of a Government Hydrographic office conforming to International Hydrographic Office standards.
*   There is an adequate independent back system. This may be a second ECDIS unit that meets the functional requirements set out in Annex 6 to MSC.232(82), or an up to date outfit of paper charts.
*   The bridge watchkeepers have been appropriately trained.

The entry "ECDIS" in the Form E to the Cargo Ship Safety Equipment Certificate or Cargo Ship Safety Certificate or in the Form P to the vessel's Passenger Ship Safety Certificate should only be completed when the vessel is fully equipped with ECDIS, including a back-up system in accordance with the performance standard and the operators have met the training requirements for ECDIS. The entry should specify the type of back-up system, either full paper charts or an electronic system.

Where an approved ECDIS system is installed and the backup system is an electronic system in accordance with MSC.232 (82) or a duplicate ECDIS it will not be necessary to carry paper charts except as noted in the following paragraph.

While the world coverage of System Electronic Navigational Charts is increasing, there are still areas where full coverage is not available. In these areas an approved ECDIS system will also have the capability to operate using Raster Navigational Charts (RCDS). These do not provide the functionality of full ECDIS mode and if the ship is operating in areas where the system will be using RCDS mode, an appropriate folio of paper charts for those areas is required to be carried. (Appendix 7 to MSC.232 (82)). This need not be a full set of charts if the system backup is electronic but it should have sufficient coverage to provide watchkeepers with information on the overall navigational environment and with an adequate "look ahead" capability.

Prior to the mandatory carriage dates for ECDIS officers serving in ships with Safety Equipment certificates that show "paper charts" as the primary navigational system and not ECDIS, even if the ship carried ECDIS, do not require to have completed the ECDIS training. However the training is highly recommended.

Training requirements for ECDIS.

For Antigua and Barbuda ships wishing to have ECDIS as the primary navigational tool the users of the system must have received appropriate training. The minimum requirements are attendance at a generic EDCDIS training course and in addition, system specific training applicable to the system in use on board.

The generic training course may be any ECDIS course based on IMO Model course 1.27 either as a dedicated course or as part of a broader course. Users will be expected to be able to demonstrate to Port State Control documentary evidence of having completed the training.

System specific training must be on the same type of system that is fitted on board. Where the generic training includes training on this system, and the course certificate clearly states this, the system specific training may be assumed to be completed.

System specific training should be undertaken using the actual or identical equipment and can be achieved by a variety of means including a manufacturer's course, training conducted by a manufacturer's representative, training conducted by a person who has been trained as a trainer for that equipment, or by using a manufacturer's computer based training system. If system familiarisation training is arranged on board it should be clearly included within the ship's ISM system and be arranged with careful regard to the requirement in SN.1/Circ 276 for the familiarisation training to be comprehensive . In this regard the shipboard procedures for it should clarify exactly what it covers and have a means to record that it has been properly completed.

Training of relief officers by their predecessors and similar "trickle down" training systems outside a formal and structured system are not accepted. Whichever system is used there should be verifiable proof of training in the form of documentary evidence which identifies the equipment for which it is valid.

Port State Control authorities have already made it clear that ships which appear to be navigating on ECDIS as a primary system without official chart data and without operator training will be detained.

Electronic navigational publications.

As well as nautical charts, ships are required to carry a number of up to date navigational publications essential to safe navigation including:

- Tide tables,
- Almanac,
- Light Lists,
- Sailing Directions,
- Notices to Mariners

Antigua and Barbuda ships may carry and use official electronic versions of these publications in electronic format instead of paper versions provided that the arrangements on board are such that the data can be displayed on back up equipment and the data can be accessed in the event of a main power failure.

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