

A SIMPLE GUIDE TO APPLYING FOR A THAMES SAILING BARGE EXEMPTION or REVALIDATION

Most applications for an exemption or a revalidation contain at least 1 error or omission - often quite a few! Even some of us on the Exemption Panel have struggled as well, so we have tried to make the forms more straightforward, to aid accuracy and compliance. It is vital that you use the latest forms; Frank Morris should send you these at least 4 weeks before your expiry/renewal date. All the information you need to fill in the forms is in "The Standard"; you will find it a help to have a copy to hand when applying.

ELECTRONIC

You are encouraged to send applications by email to Frank Morris, Secretary to the SBA/AOB Joint Panel, at sba@ffbs.co.uk. However by post is also acceptable.

START DATE

Your exemption runs for 5 years, but has to be revalidated annually. The start date is the date of your initial Out of Water Survey, so this date repeats annually as your revalidation date. When applying for your Year 3 revalidation you will need to have had an Afloat Survey; this can be deferred to your Year 4 revalidation but no later than that. You do not have to send an Afloat Survey report with your submission, but the Surveyor's Declaration and Surveyor's Summary forms must be sent.

DECLARATIONS

An Owner's Declaration must be signed each year. If you are the Owner's representative rather than the actual owner, this must be stated and authorized by the Owner. The Surveyor's Declaration is only needed at the start (Year 1) along with the copy of the out of water survey report and then again in Year 3 or Year 4 when you have had an afloat survey. Should your survey be carried out by an MCA surveyor, they must be notified in advance that they will be required to complete and sign their surveyors declaration and surveyors summary of condition report.

SUMMARY and RECORD forms

The Owner's Summary form is self-explanatory. The Record of Equipment form is less so. We have improved this to make it easier for you to complete - and for the Panel to review.

RECORD OF EQUIPMENT

Fill in the name of the barge and date of inspection at the top of each sheet. All boxes highlighted (blacklined) **must** be filled in unless there is an option or alternative. Should any expiry dates fall before your year-end then you should state in 'Notes' how this is logged and your procedure to rectify.

In general, any reference to approval should be made, for example, "in accordance with The Standard" and not to the Panel or to the MCA.

Liferafts:

- (1) Make:
- (2) Type:
- (3) Standard:
- (4) Capacity:

(5) Solas pack: fill in if you know this information; it will be on your Liferaft certificate. If you are hiring your raft(s) state the number of rafts and total capacity (they must cover 100% of the persons on board) and where you are hiring them from and their delivery and expiry dates. Either way, you must fill in:

(6) Stowage method: with the rafts' location and if they are float—free with a breakable link.

(7) Hydrostatic Release is optional, if you have these, fill in the 3 boxes with make, number and expiry date.

(8) Lifebuoys/Rings: you must have minimum of 4, one must have a dan buoy attached, 2 must have lights - state the number in the boxes.

(9) Lifejackets: The requirements are listed in the Standard; they can be either inflatable or rigid.

List the numbers (minimum provision is the number of persons on board + 2 extra).

You must state the type and make in the Type & Standard box.

All must have lights; list their numbers and expiry dates.

List number with whistles and reflective tape.

If the jackets are hired and you don't have any relevant information, state 'On hire' but you must still state where you are hiring from, the numbers and date of hire.

(10) Flares: You need a minimum of 2 red hand-held and 2 orange smoke - state numbers and expiry dates.

(11) Safety Manual: You must have a safety manual describing all aspects relating to safety specifically on YOUR barge. For some obscure reason, 20% of all applicants in the past have failed to complete this box!

(12) Life Saving Signal Tables: You must have EITHER Solas No 1 or No 2.

Fire Extinguishing Equipment

(13) You must have a system for the engine room, be it built in or appropriate extinguishers through an inlet. List number, expiry date and under 'Notes' describe the type of system.

(14) You must have either a power driven pump, which must be diesel, or a

(15) Manual pump.

(16) Fire Hose and nozzle: Needs a tick!

(17) Fire extinguishers: You must have at least 2 as a minimum (we recommend many more). They must be serviced to their maker's specifications. List numbers and expiry dates.

(18) Buckets: You must have at least 2

(19) Fire blankets: You must have at least 1- it will probably have a service date.

General Gear

(20) First Aid Kit: This needs a Category C rating. You must list its overall expiry date, or dates item-by-item.

(21) Needs a tick!

(22) Needs a tick! You must have one.

(23) A sheet must be on display

(24) List the No and type - you must have at the very least one manual pump.

(25) Not absolutely compulsory if you have a manual fire pump, which could double as a bilge pump.

However a diesel pump is most strongly advised. Petrol pumps are not acceptable - see The Standard.

(26) Again not compulsory but strongly advised

(27) You must list these. They might/should include: up-to-date charts, compasses, GPS, Lead lines, Depth sounders etc.

(28) LPG Gas System: You must confirm that it conforms with Annex 1 in the Standard. It is not obligatory to have a Gas Certificate but it is good practice and we strongly recommend that you have one. If you don't have a certificate it is a good idea for your safety to get your surveyor to check the system and to record this in the survey report.

Having completed your paperwork, don't leave it to the last moment to submit it; please allow at least a month before you are in commission. The AOB/SBA Panel is obliged by the MCA to review each application and this takes a couple of weeks minimum, or longer if there are queries.

If you know when your barge is going to be out of commission at the end of your season, it does no harm to state this date, it can cover items becoming time expired during your winter lay-up. It's worth remembering that the MCA does sometimes carry out spot checks or targeted inspections, at any time, in or out of season and whether or not a barge has been laid up for the winter has been an issue in the past.

PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOUR ANSWERS ARE LEGIBLY PRINTED