

Merchant Marine Notice

MMN-25-002

Title:	Guidelines for the Implementation of Annual Flag State Inspection	
To:	Ship Owners, ISM Operators, Ship Managers, Deputy Registrars	
Issuance Date:	19 August 2025	Revision No.: 1.0
MMN Superseded:	MMN-25-002	

1. REFERENCES

- United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) Article 94.
- Merchant Ships (Registration) Act, Chapter 236, *in its latest revision*.

2. REVOKED

- MMN-19-006r3:** Port State Control Analysis and Self-Inspection Program.
MMN-25-002: Guidelines for the Implementation of Annual Flag State Inspection.

3. DEFINITIONS

- **Annual Flag State Inspection:** A mandatory inspection/audit of Belize-registered ships.
- **New Building:** Any vessel whose keel is laid on or after 2025.
- **Flag State Inspector:** An inspector authorized by IMMARBEL.
- **Flag State Inspection (FSI):** Inspections of ships performed by a Flag State Inspector.
- **Inspection Companies:** Companies authorized to carry FSI for IMMARBEL.

4. INTRODUCTION

- 4.1. **IMMARBEL's Commitment:** IMMARBEL is committed to ensuring its fleet comply with international regulations. This is evident through the FSI programme.

5. PURPOSE

- 5.1. The purpose of this Merchant Marine Notice is to provide guidance to all owners and operators regarding the mandatory Annual FSI Programme.

6. APPLICATION/EXEMPTIONS

- 6.1. This Merchant Marine Notice applies to:
- 6.1.1. All Belize-flagged vessels subjected to Port State Control Inspections as defined in [Resolution A.1185\(33\)](#) Procedures for Port State Control.

- 6.2. Exemptions:

The following vessels are exempt from the requirements of this notice:



- i. Vessels registered for single delivery voyages.
- ii. Vessels **not** propelled by mechanical means.
- iii. Pleasure yachts **not** engaged in trade.
- iv. New Buildings: Newly built vessels may be exempted for up to five years.
- v. Fishing Vessels, unless deemed necessary by the Administration.

7. CONTENT

7.1. Annual inspection:

7.1.1. All vessels are due for annual FSI effective 1st March 2025.

7.1.2. *FSI Due Date*: This date corresponds with the vessel's last FSI. All other vessels not yet inspected, must conduct its first FS Inspection before March 2026, and thereafter each year corresponding to the date of first inspection.

8. REQUIREMENTS

- 8.1. Each vessel subject to this notice must be inspected and issued a *Statement of Compliance for Annual Flag State Inspection (Form TDF-037)* valid for 1 year, subject to rectification of deficiencies identified by the Flag State Inspector.
- 8.2. Inspections must be requested by the owners/operators or agents using the application form TDF-036 and submitted to inspections@immarbe.com.

9. RESPONSIBILITY

9.1. Owners/operators:

Owners/operators or their agents must:

1. Apply for and make arrangements for their vessel's annual FSI.
2. Ensure agreed charges for transportation expenses are paid directly to the inspector.
3. Secure authorization and boarding of FS Inspector from relevant authorities.
4. Notify the inspector of any issues regarding the vessel prior to the inspection.
5. Ensure that owners, operators, agents, or crews do not impede or obstruct the FS Inspector in the conduct of his/ her duty.
6. Ensure the ship's master cooperates with the inspector and signs (*in duplicate*) the Form TDF-003a List of Findings.
7. Take immediate actions to rectify deficiencies identified by the FS Inspector.
8. Immediately notify IMMARBE of corrective actions for detainable deficiencies.
9. Submit rectification of deficiencies within 14 days of FSI, using Form TDF-020.

10. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

- 10.1. Under no circumstances should the same Inspector who surveyed a vessel for statutory certificates conduct its Annual FSI while those certificates are valid and vice-versa.



11. EXTENSIONS:

- 11.1. In exceptional *force majeure* circumstances, the Administration may permit the extension of the annual FSI.
- 11.2. In such cases, operators must apply for a *Statement of Extension* via their designated office, in accordance with [MMN-19-003](#).

12. ACTIONS REQUESTED

- 12.1. Shipowners, Operators, and Deputy Registrars are advised to implement this Notice.

13. DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

- 13.1. \$5,000: Failure to apply for and make proper arrangements for their vessel's FSI.
- 13.2. \$5,000: Failure to submit to IMMARBE a rectification report within 14 days of the FSI.
- 13.3. \$5,000: Obstruction of a FS Inspector in the conduct of an approved inspection.
- 13.4. \$10,000: Repeat offenders under conditions outlined in 13.1, 13.2 or 13.3.
- 13.5. Cancellation from the registry: Vessels that fail to comply with this notice and are subsequently detained.
- 13.6. Other legal actions as specified under the Belize Merchant Ships (Registration) Act and Statutory Instrument 56 of 1999.

The Administration encourages all Shipowners, Operators, Deputy Registrars to review and comply with the contents of this Notice.

IMMARBE appreciates your cooperation and assistance.

This notice was issued in Belize City, Belize on 19 August 2025.

Eng. Eduardo Simon
Director of Technical and
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IMMARBE

For: Mr. Paul Gersok
Managing Director
IMMARBE

Any queries related to this Notice shall be directed to inspections@immarbe.com