

Vessel Registration under the Malta Flag

Malta's strategic geographical position at the centre of the Mediterranean and Europe, makes it very attractive to ship-owners interested in registering their yachts under a competitive flag, offering various advantages whilst safeguarding rights and interests of ship-owners and seafarers. Malta is a Member of the European Union thus its law and regulations are all compliant with EU directives. Moreover, Malta has also ratified most of the International Conventions issued by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the United Nations (UN).

Any yacht may be registered under the Malta flag. The flag offers the possibility to register a yacht for pleasure or commercial use. A pleasure yacht, as understood by the Maltese Merchant Shipping Directorate, is one of 6m in length or more, which does not carry passengers for reward and is not engaged in trade. On the other hand, a commercial yacht is considered to be one of not less than 15m in length with a gross tonnage not exceeding 3000 gross tons. Yachts registered under the Commercial Yacht Register are such that do not carry cargo, carry not more than 12 passengers on board and are owned and/ or operated by an individual or corporate entity for the commercial use thereof.

Ship-owners may benefit from an extensive range of advantages offered under Maltese legislation when registering their yachts under the Malta flag. These advantages include:

- Efficient procedures for the registration of vessels and mortgages over such vessels;
- Exemptions from income tax on income derived from shipping activities, donation and succession duty on the capital represented therein, duty on documents and transfers (stamp duties) payable on sale or transfer, of Maltese vessels of 1000 net tons and over;
- Exemptions from income tax, donation and succession duty, and duty on documents and transfers (stamp duties) may be granted to Maltese vessels under 1000 net tons, after applications are filed and according to Government policy;
- Registration of oilrigs and barges;
- Registration of hulls or vessels under construction and mortgages over such vessels;
- No restrictions on the nationality of the master, officers and crew serving on Maltese vessels;
- No restrictions on the nationality of shareholders and directors of Maltese shipping companies;
- easy access to decision-makers within competent authorities, backed by a qualified and efficient team of technical officers available for urgent matters on a 24-hour basis;
- no trading restrictions imposed on Maltese registered vessels;
- a number of bilateral maritime agreements with other maritime nations.

Melita Marine LTD offers various yachting services including assistance in registration of vessels, and administration thereof, and company incorporation, and administration thereof. For further information regarding vessel registration and/ or company incorporation under the Maltese Registries, please contact Dr. Anndrea Moran, Legal Department, responsible for vessel registration and company incorporation, via email on a.moran@melitamarinegroup.net or via telephone on +356 21 33 0964/ 82 or via mobile on +356 99975281.