



Fact sheet concerning the issue of Swiss flag certificates

1. Introduction

The Swiss flag certificate was created in order to permit owners of seaworthy vessels (in accordance with EC categories A and B) to sail in foreign and international waters.

2. Nationality

The owner of the vessel must be a Swiss citizen or a Swiss association that actively promotes sailing and water sports, etc. Citizens with dual nationality cannot obtain a Swiss flag certificate if their official place of residence is in the country of their other (i.e. non-Swiss) citizenship.

3. Proof of ownership and financing

Proof of ownership of the vessel must be provided in the form of appropriate documentation, e.g. purchase agreement, gift agreement or certificate of inheritance.

4. Vessels for which a Swiss flag certificate cannot be issued

Non-seaworthy vessels: This term encompasses vessels classified as small boats on the basis of their construction ("harbour vessels" as defined under EC category C).

5. Foreign influence and registration in other countries

By submitting an application for a Swiss flag certificate, the owner is required to simultaneously declare that he/she is not concealing any foreign influence on the vessel, and has not registered the vessel in a foreign public register, nor intends to do so. The corresponding declarations are included in the application form.

6. Expert report

An independent expert report (survey) is required for the registration of second-hand yachts. For new vessels, a copy of the type approval and/or construction certificate has to be supplied.

7. Equipping of vessels

The equipping of vessels registered under the Swiss flag must comply with the official guidelines.

8. Change of ownership

Swiss flag certificates are non-transferable. If the vessel changes hands, the flag certificate is no longer valid and must be returned to the Swiss Maritime Navigation Office for cancellation. If the new owner wishes to obtain a Swiss flag certificate, he or she must submit an application to the above authority.