

Vessel safety inspection list



In this document you will find the four categories of documents and equipment that you need to have onboard when going through the safety inspection done by the St Maarten Sea Rescue Foundation in order to get the registration for the vessel through the Shipping Inspectorate of St Maarten (SSRF does not register vessels, our foundation inspects them for safety).

The list provided below is merely a tool for you to prepare your vessel for the inspection. Our inspectors will also inspect the general condition of the vessel to see if it is deemed safe and no rights can be

The St Maarten Sea Rescue Foundation cannot take responsibilities in any case for vessels that have gone through the inspection. The safety of the crew and passengers is at the virtue of the owner/captain of a vessel. The content of this document is (c) 2012 by the St Maarten Sea Rescue Foundation. Information is liable to change without prior notice.

Once you are sure the vessel is ready for the inspection, please go <http://sxmsearescue.weebly.com> (or www.sxmsearescue.org and click on the Inspections button) and click on the Inspection Request Form (third menu item on the top row). You can make an appointment by filling in the form. Our volunteer inspectors will respond to your request usually within 3 to 4 working days. *Appointments by telephone are not accepted, so please do not call any of our members – you will receive a response.*

A donation is required for the inspection. Information is also found on the above mentioned website. We offer Onsite (Priority) inspections and Offsite (at the Rescue office in Great Bay).

This document is to help boaters prepare for safe boating and to prepare their vessels for inspections. All equipment mentioned should be on board at all times.

Items printed in RED are mandatory to have on board of the vessel

Section 1 - Documents

The following information is requested during the inspection

Certificate of competence

A boating license/certificate of competence issued by the St Maarten Port Authorities.

VHF License

A VHF operator's license issued by the Buro of Telecommunications on St Maarten. Foreign documents are allowed during inspections but coastguard could request a local issued license when asked. For more information about the VHF License and how to obtain one please contact the Buro of Telecommunications on 1 721 542 4699 or mail info@sxmregulator.com.

Number of persons

This describes the number of persons the vessel needs to be registered for. This includes the crew and should never exceed the number of persons a vessel is build for. The amount of adult life vests onboard should be at least the same as the number of persons requested here.

Section 2 - Navigational tools

The following navigational tools are inspected during the vessel inspection (brand names/type is a coincidence and could be from other manufacturers).

Logbook

A ships log with trips, technical problems, locations, crew, maintenance etc. should be kept on the vessel

Coastal charts



Coastal charts of St Maarten and surrounding waters can be a lifesaver when plotting a course of finding your location.

Divider



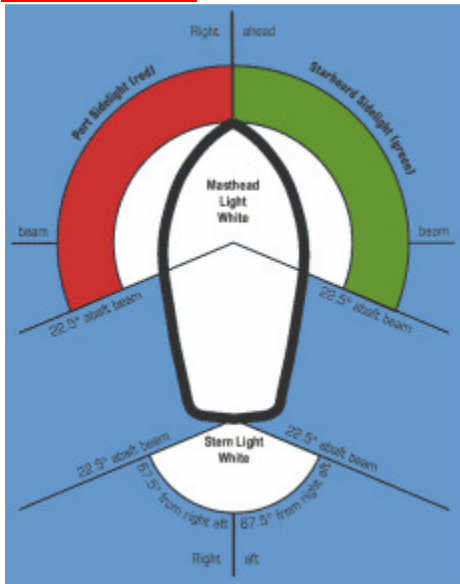
Used to plot course and distance when using coastal charts.

Parallel ruler



Used to plot course and distance when using coastal charts.

Navigation lights



Navigation lights should be mounted on the vessel. A green light on Starboard side, a Red light on Port side and a stern light. A white steaming light should be mounted on the top/mast of the vessel. Smaller vessels (e.g. dinghys) can also use one 360 degree round shining white light.

Anchor light



A white 360 degree light with separate on/off switch (separate from navigation/running lights) is needed to show that your vessel is at anchor in the dark.

Handheld VHF



We strongly advise vessels owners to also have handheld VHF available on the vessel. In case of power failures on the vessel a base VHF could stop functioning and a handheld would be a perfect for of emergency communication. Our inspectors will perform a radio check using the VHF radio.

Anchor gear



Every vessel should have at least one anchor (preferably two) with enough chain and rope to sustain the weight of the vessel when at anchor.

EPIRB



An EPIRB is a radio beacon that transmits your location in case of an emergency and usually deploy themselves when found in the water for instance when a vessel is sinking. They need to be registered for emergency services to be able to know what type of vessel is in trouble etc. They can also be attached to a life raft/vest to be able to find survivors after an emergency.

GPS



A Global Positioning System device allows a captain/crew to always know where they are. This information greatly reduces time needed to find vessels in distress by Search and Rescue operations.

GPS - 2



Another GPS model also allowed, a handheld GPS device that has the ability to inform it's barer of the current position.

Barometer



A barometer can assist during navigation and weather prediction.

Binoculars



At least one set of binoculars should be on the vessel. Does not need to be night vision, as long as they work.

Compass



A compass mounted on the vessel can assist in keeping your course and finding your position. Although not mandatory we strongly advise to have a compass on the vessel.

Horn/whistle



A horn (fixed or handheld) or whistle should be available on the vessel to announce danger, divert others and for use while maneuvering at night or in fog.

Radar reflector



Having a radar reflector makes it possible for other vessels, including Search and Rescue vessels, to easily spot other vessels on radar transponder systems greatly reducing the time needed to find a vessel in distress. The radar reflector should be mounted as high as possible on the vessels' exterior.

Radar reflector - 2



Another model of radar reflector, usually found on larger/sailing vessels.

Base VHF



A base VHF station should be on board the vessel including an external antenna. VHF radio signals use line of sight and the antenna should be mounted as high as possible on the vessel.

Our inspectors will perform a radio check using the VHF radio.

Anchor day signal



When at anchor during daylight a black ball should be visible on your vessel. This can be an inflatable one or plastic model.

Signaling mirror



Every vessel should have one signaling mirror. Preferred model has a hole in the middle to enable the user to look through it while using the mirror.

Radar transponder



Having a radar on board the vessel greatly reduces the risk of collisions with other vessels as well as running ashore unintentionally.

Section 3 - Miscellaneous

Below is a list of some miscellaneous equipment that needs to be on board the vessel or is inspected during the vessel inspection.

St Maarten Flag



Every vessel registered in the St Maarten registry should have a country flag on the stern of the vessel. The flag should be in good condition and visible for others.

When visiting another country that country's flag should be hoisted as high as possible on the vessel while keeping the St Maarten flag on the stern.

Flag mast

A decent flag mast should be used to attach the St Maarten flag too. In most cases the posts used for a bimini or other deck roofing is sufficient.

Bucket with line



A solid bucket with a line attached to it of at least 1m length should be easily available on the vessel. This to allow quick access to water in case of an emergency or to be able to get water from inside the vessel in case of a leak for instance.

Drinking water



At least 2 liter of water per crew member/passenger per day scheduled to be on at sea should be on the vessel.

Emergency food



Chocolate bars, health bars or any other sort of food should be on the vessel for the passengers and crew. This can also be canned foods or other imperishable food items.

Stowage fuel/gas



Cooking gas, fuel and other combustible liquids or gasses are dangerous to have on a vessel. Our inspectors will inspect gas bottles, their connection and (vented) location,

Stowage fuel/gas - 2



If cooking gas is used our inspectors will also inspect the hoses and clamps used to connect the gas bottle to the stove or barbecue. In general these hoses need to be replaced about every two years. Our advice is to double clamp hoses.

Holding tanks



Our inspectors will check any holding tank that is on the vessel for safety.

Section 4 - Safety equipment

Below is a list of safety equipment inspected during the inspection (brand names/type is a coincidence and could be from other manufacturers).

Flash light



A working flash light should be on the vessel.

Spare batteries



Spare batteries for the flash light.

Fire extinguisher



One or more fire extinguishers should be on the vessel. The extinguishers should be in good condition and located where they can be easily grabbed in case of a fire. Automatic fire extinguishers should be available in engine rooms of gas powered vessels. A fire extinguisher should also be available in the galley when using cooking gas.

Life ring + 10m line and MOB light



A life ring should be on the vessel with a line attached to it as well as a working Man Over Board light.

MOB Light



An operational automatic Man Over Board light should be attached to the life ring.

Adult life jackets



There should be at least the same amount of life vests on the vessel for adult as the number of persons the vessel is registered for. These vests should be at least Type II with reflection and a whistle. A light is an asset. In addition to the adult vests you should add at least 10% of the registered persons in child sizes. For instance if a vessel is registered for 8 persons you need 8 adult vests and 1 child vest. If the vessel is registered to 12 you need 12 adult vests and 2 child vests. Every life vest needs to have the name of the vessel written on it.

Life vests - what not to do



During inspections we find that a lot of vessels carry life vests similar to the one showed here. These are Type II vests but without reflection and without a whistle. They can only be approved if reflection and a whistle is added to the vests. Every life vest should be in a good condition.

Life vest - JETSKI/WAVERUNNING



For the inspection of jetski and waverunner type vessels you need to carry a life vest as shown here. This is because these do not have a neck collar. Having a neck collar vest while falling off a high speed jetski or waverunner can cause serious injury to the person.

Parachute signals



At least three parachute flares should be on the vessel at all times. The expiration date of these parachute signals is inspected. Parachute signals can be either USCG or SOLAS approved.

Hand flares



At least three handflares should be on the vessel at all times. The expiration date of these flares is inspected. Flares can be either USCG or SOLAS approved.

Bilge pump



An automatic or manual switched bilge pump should be mounted in the bilge.

NOTE; If the location of the bilge pump also has gas lines or fuel filters running through it some form of ventilation is needed to prevent explosions. See below.

Bilge & engine room ventilation



Gasoline fumes are highly explosive and can cause serious injuries or death when ignited. If fuel lines and/or filters are running through compartments that also house automatic pumps or other equipment some form of ventilation is needed.

Gasoline powered vessels with inboard engines should ALWAYS have active ventilation in the engine room. Passive bilge ventilation should at least have air flowing through the compartment. That means at least two holes that are not facing the same way that provide air to flow through the bilge. We however strongly recommend active ventilation to be mounted outside of the bilge with a hose going down into the bilge to be able to suck out heavy gasoline fumes.

Hand rails (1m height)

Applies only to commercial vessels.

Emergency steering



Some form of emergency steering should be available in case the main steering fails. In general two engine vessels can steer with the engines so that is sufficient as emergency steering.

Emergency propulsion/steering one engine vessels



Vessels with one engine should carry an oar for emergency steering and propulsion in case of engine failure.

First aid kit



A fully stocked first aid kit should be on the vessel. Make sure to replace supplies when you used them.

Life raft



If there is a life raft on the vessel it should be sufficient to carry the amount of persons the vessel is registered for.

Antislip deck



The deck of the vessel needs to be antislip (either from the factory or painted).

Boathook



At least one boathook should be available on the vessel

Boarding ladder



A boarding ladder should be available on the vessel.

Towing lines



There should be additional lines on the vessel to be used when in tow or towing another vessel.

Knife/axe



An axe or a knife should be available on the vessel with enough strength to cut a line should someone gets entangled in it.

Toolkit



A stocked toolkit should be available on the vessel. A utility knife is usually not sufficient since you may need socket wrenches and other tools to solve mechanical problems.