

Shipping & Transport - Cyprus

Obligations of foreign vessels under port state control regime

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The Department of Merchant Shipping recently issued a circular (26/2012) reminding operators, representatives and masters of foreign vessels calling at Cyprus ports of their obligations under the Merchant Shipping (Community Vessel Traffic Monitoring and Information System) Law 2004, as amended, and the Merchant Shipping (Port State Control) Law 2011.

Section 6 of the Merchant Shipping (Community Vessel Traffic Monitoring and Information System) Law requires a vessel to notify its anticipated arrival at least 24 hours before arrival or, if the voyage time is less than 24 hours, at the time that the ship leaves the previous port. Any amendments to the information should be notified accurately and without delay. An administrative fine of up to €8,543 may be imposed for non-compliance.

Furthermore, Section 12(1) of the Merchant Shipping (Port State Control) Law provides that the operator, representative or master of any foreign vessel that is liable to an expanded inspection (as defined in Section 17 of the law) which calls at a Cyprus port should submit the relevant information at least 72 hours before the vessel's arrival or, if the voyage time is less than 72 hours, at the time the ship leaves the previous port. The notification should make clear whether the vessel will enter a Cyprus port or stay at anchorage. An administrative fine of up to €8,550 may be imposed for non-compliance.

If a foreign vessel that is liable to such expanded inspection fails to give the required 72 hours' notice of arrival, the operator, representative and master must ensure that the vessel remains at the port or anchorage for 72 hours after arrival, so as to allow sufficient time to arrange the required expanded inspection. Failure to do so is a criminal offence punishable with a fine of up to €8,550, imprisonment for up to two years or both.

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