

Shipping & Transport - Cyprus

Cyprus accepts wreck removal certificates issued under Nairobi Convention

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The Nairobi International Convention on the Removal of Wrecks (adopted on May 18 2007) will enter into force on April 14 2015, a year after gaining approval from the requisite number of countries.

The convention provides the legal basis for states to remove (or order the removal of) shipwrecks that have the potential to affect adversely the safety of lives, goods and property at sea, as well as the marine environment. Under the convention, a set of uniform international rules aimed at ensuring the prompt and effective removal of wrecks will come into force, placing financial responsibility for the removal of certain hazardous wrecks on shipowners, thus making insurance compulsory.

Cyprus has yet to ratify the convention. A vote in Parliament on the matter is pending. As a result, the Department of Merchant Shipping will not issue the necessary wreck removal certificates. While the department has made no official announcement, it has indicated that in the interim it will accept wreck removal certificates issued by countries that have already ratified the convention to avoid any disruption in the operation and insurance cover of ships flying the Cypriot flag.

When the ratification process is completed in Cyprus there will be no need for these certificates to be re-issued, except where circumstances would require the issue of a new certificate, such as in the event of a change of ownership or in case of renewals where a new wreck removal certificate is required by the protection and indemnity insurance club.

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