

## Changes to the Cayman Islands' Shipping Act

All crewmembers onboard yachts flagged to the Cayman Islands must have a valid SEA in place or captains or shipowners may face criminal charges and fines.

Captains of yachts that are flagged in the Cayman Islands may be open to criminal prosecution and a significant fine if they sail (or attempt to sail) when there is a crewmember onboard without a Seafarers' Employment Agreement (SEA).

The Cayman Islands' Shipping Act was recently updated to expand the requirement from commercial vessels to all vessels, including privately registered yachts. Clause 90.(4) of the updated Act, which went into force on 11 March 2024, provides that "if a ship goes to sea or attempts to go to sea in contravention of the requirements of this section, the master and the shipowner commit an offence and are liable on summary conviction to a fine of twenty thousand dollars".

This provides more security for yacht crew, but captains may face a large fine if their vessel is not compliant with the revised Shipping Act.

Owners need to be aware that, if any vessel flagged to Cayman Islands goes to sea with any crew onboard who do not have a valid SEA in place, the master (along with the shipowner) can be found in contravention of the new Act and subject to such a fine.