



# Döhle Yacht Crew



Guide to Careers on Superyachts  
The Large Yacht Code

## The Large Yacht Code (LY1-3)

With the rapid growth of the number of superyachts in operation it was deemed necessary to introduce a code of practice which governed the operation of these vessels.

The UK's Maritime and Coastguard Agency's (MCA) "Code of Practice for the Safety of Large Commercial Sailing and Motor Vessels", or LY1, was introduced in 1998.

The Code applied to vessels in commercial use for sport or pleasure, which are 24 metres in "load line" length and over. Or, if they were built before July 1968, are 150 gross tons (GT) and over, according to the tonnage measurement regulations at that date. Such vessels are not permitted to carry cargo, or more than 12 passengers.

The Code sets standards of safety and pollution prevention, which are appropriate to the size and operation of the vessel. For vessels of this size, standards are normally set by the relevant international conventions. The Code provides equivalent standards, as permitted by these conventions where it is not reasonable or practical to comply with the prescriptive requirements of the international convention.

It was recognised that LY1 would have to be revised to take account of advances in technology and changes of practice. This revision took place in consultation with the Large Yacht Industry. All comments from that consultation were considered by working groups comprising experts from the international large yacht industry.

### LY2

The new Code, now known as "The Large Commercial Yacht Code", or LY2, came into effect on 24th September 2004.

The Code recognised that vessels in commercial use for sport or pleasure do not fall naturally into a single classification and prescribed merchant ship safety standards may be incompatible with the safety needs particular to such vessels.

The Code applied to vessels registered in the UK, and the Red Ensign countries of the Isle of Man, Cayman Islands, Bermuda, Gibraltar, Anguilla, British Virgin Islands, Falkland Islands, Guernsey, Jersey, Montserrat, St Helena and the Turks and Caicos Islands.

The Code applied to existing and new Red Ensign vessels which are:

- Over 24 metres in length, or;
- Over 150 gross tons if built prior to 21st July 1968
- Are in commercial use for pleasure or sport
- Do not carry more than 12 passengers
- Do not carry cargo

Chartering is a commercial use of the vessel and thus all vessels that charter under the Red Ensign should comply with the Code.

In LY1, there was no upper size limit to the Construction and Equipment sections. However, there was an upper limit of 3000 GT for deck officer qualifications specifically designed for yachts and sail training vessels. The general view amongst the industry was that any yacht of more than 3000 GT should not be built to the code but in accordance with the relevant IMO Conventions. Thus, the upper limit for all applications of the code is now 3000 GT. Existing yachts exceeding 3000 GT which are already operating within the code may of course remain within the code.

Yachts exceeding 3000 GT, for which the building contract was signed before 24th September 2004, may still be built to the Code. The Code however is intended for genuine yachts and sail training vessels and the MCA will not permit its use to be abused by its application to ships for which it was never intended. If a vessel is realistically beyond the scope of the code, it will not be accepted for survey and certification.

A significant change in LY2 was the introduction of the category “Short Range Yacht” for those vessels that cannot, or have no operational need to, meet the ‘unlimited’ criteria. This is particularly relevant to high-powered yachts with large engines that do not meet the subdivision and ‘damage survivability’ requirements in relation to engine-room flooding.

The parameters for Short Range Yachts are:

- Less than 300 GT (for new vessels); or Less than 500 GT (for existing vessels)
- Operation up to 60 miles from a safe haven (this may be increased to 90 miles on specified routes with the agreement of the Administration); and Operation within favourable weather – Force 4 by forecast/actual

The MCA believed that these yachts would not be unduly hampered in their operations and the weather restriction may actually assist Captains when they seek, for reasons of good seamanship, to avoid rough conditions. Due to the proximity of a safe haven and a reasonable presumption of available assistance, there is also a reduction in the requirements for structural fire protection (a weight-saving that will further benefit high-speed craft). “Short Range Yachts” are also permitted reduced standards of weather tight integrity, such as in sill heights and window specifications.

Additionally, provided that the yacht can demonstrate adequate manoeuvrability for man-overboard recovery; there was no need for a Rescue Boat to be carried. However, it is necessary for the person manoeuvring the yacht to be able to see the recovery operation whilst manoeuvring, although this may be achieved by the use of remote controls. Recovery should not be over the stern or adjacent to propellers.

### LY3

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) launched the new Large Yacht Code (LY3) at the 2012 Monaco Yacht Show.

LY3 was developed by an industry working group in order to keep up with developments in the industry and amendments which have subsequently taken place with the international conventions for which the codes provide an alternative means of achieving compliance, more suited to these particular types of vessels.

LY3 has also been brought up to date to include the latest technology in radio communication equipment and requirements for masts and rigging for sailing yachts. Compliance with the standards of the Code will entitle a superyacht to be issued with certification upon satisfactory completion of surveys and inspections. An administration may consider a specific alternative standard however to any of that required by the Code. The Code includes alternative requirements for crew accommodation which provide substantial equivalence to the MLC, but are more in keeping with the practicalities and purpose of these yachts.

Although as a new entrant into the industry you are not required to be fully conversant with the Code you will, as you progress up the career ladder, be expected to understand the requirements of the Code.

A copy of the Code may be obtained from the Döhle Yachts website.

### Other Codes

Other jurisdictions have their own Codes; such as: Marshal Islands and Cook Islands.

The “Passenger Yacht Code” (PYC) was introduced in 2010. The Code of Practice applies to pleasure yachts of any size, in private use or engaged in trade, which carry more than 12 but not more than 36 passengers and which do not carry cargo.

Copies of these Codes may be obtained from the Döhle Yachts website.



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