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BY RORY JACKSON

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Maltese Flag launches new guidelines for Private Yachts

Transport Malta has introduced new guidelines that allow superyachts over 500gt to carry more than 12 guests, without needing to adhere to SOLAS or the PYC...



At the end of December 2016, Transport Malta, the authority charged with the administration of the Maltese flag, introduced guidelines that allow for the carriage of more than 12 guests on board private superyachts over 500gt.

“You have to evolve to stay relevant in this market place,” starts Ivan Sammut, registrar general for the Maltese flag. “Malta hopes to be more than just a European flagging alternative; we have a holistic view of the superyacht market and want to become a turnkey destination for private and commercial superyachts alike.”

The ‘Guidelines for Pleasure Yachts Carriage Capacities’ are part of an ongoing Maltese initiative to introduce contemporary standards in the area of private yachting that allow captains, managers, designers, builders and service providers to abreast of Maltese flagging expectations and developments.

These new guidelines are the result of the Maltese registry recognising a gap in the market. Traditionally, private yachts have been unable to carry more than 12 guests unless they have been built to SOLAS regulations or, more recently, built to the Passenger Yacht Code and registered with a Red Ensign flag.

The guidelines formalise the position of the Maltese flag with regards the carriage of more than 12 passengers, provided that appropriate safety and security measures have been implemented on board. Maltese flagging policy requires superyachts of 500gt or more to adhere to the standards and provide the certificates equivalent to those expected of a commercial yacht.

In order for a superyacht to qualify for this new certification it must be over 24m, not navigating beyond 150nm from safe haven, be in class and in possession of the necessary stability booklet, comply with the Maltese Commercial Yacht Code, comply with all applicable international conventions, carry

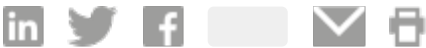
appropriate safety equipment depending on the expected persons on board and have a crew compliment in line with the commercial yacht code.

It should also be noted that these new guidelines are not strictly limited to vessels over 500gt. Transport Malta has also correctly recognised the tendency for owners to commission superyachts that fall below the international 500gt limit for conventions. Yachts of 499gt and similar sizes will also be able to benefit from the guidelines.

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