Virgin Islands Shipping & Maritime Authority

1st Floor Ritter House, Wickhams Cay II Tel: +1 284 393 0000
Website: www.vishipping.gov.vg   •   General Email: vishipping@gov.vg

NEW SOFTWARE
NOTICE TO MARINERS No.1 - 2018

> **Applicability : All vessel owners, Operators, Crewing Agents, Seafarers requiring to apply for endorsements recognizing a certificate of competency or non-STCW certificates, and to be issued a discharge book, Boat Master's License or Ship's Cook Certificate**

New software for seafarer documents applications.

The Virgin Islands Shipping Register is pleased to announce that starting from the fifteenth of April 2018 a new system for receiving applications for seafarer documents will be available to all seafarers and crewing agents requiring such documents.

The new system will result in faster processing of applications and will also include an online verification system meeting the requirements of STCW Regulation I/2 15 & 16 as well as fulfilling the requirements of the III Code. Each certificate will carry a QR code. Scanning the QR code will confirm the authenticity of the document.

The existing arrangements for applications will continue in operation but seafarers wishing to use the new system should go to:

https://bvi.seafarerhq.com

At this page they will be able to create a seafarer account and a profile. The profile includes the seafarer's basic identity information and medical certificate.

It is recommended that before creating a profile, applicants prepare all the required documents in an electronic form as scanned copies. Documents (including passport pictures and signatures) in .pdf .jepg or .png format can be uploaded.

A signature can either be created using the electronic signature option using a mouse or it may be scanned from a hand written one. If using the latter approach the signature should be within a box about 4 inches wide by 2 inches high and must be saved in .jpeg format on an otherwise blank paper.

The first part of the profile page looks like:
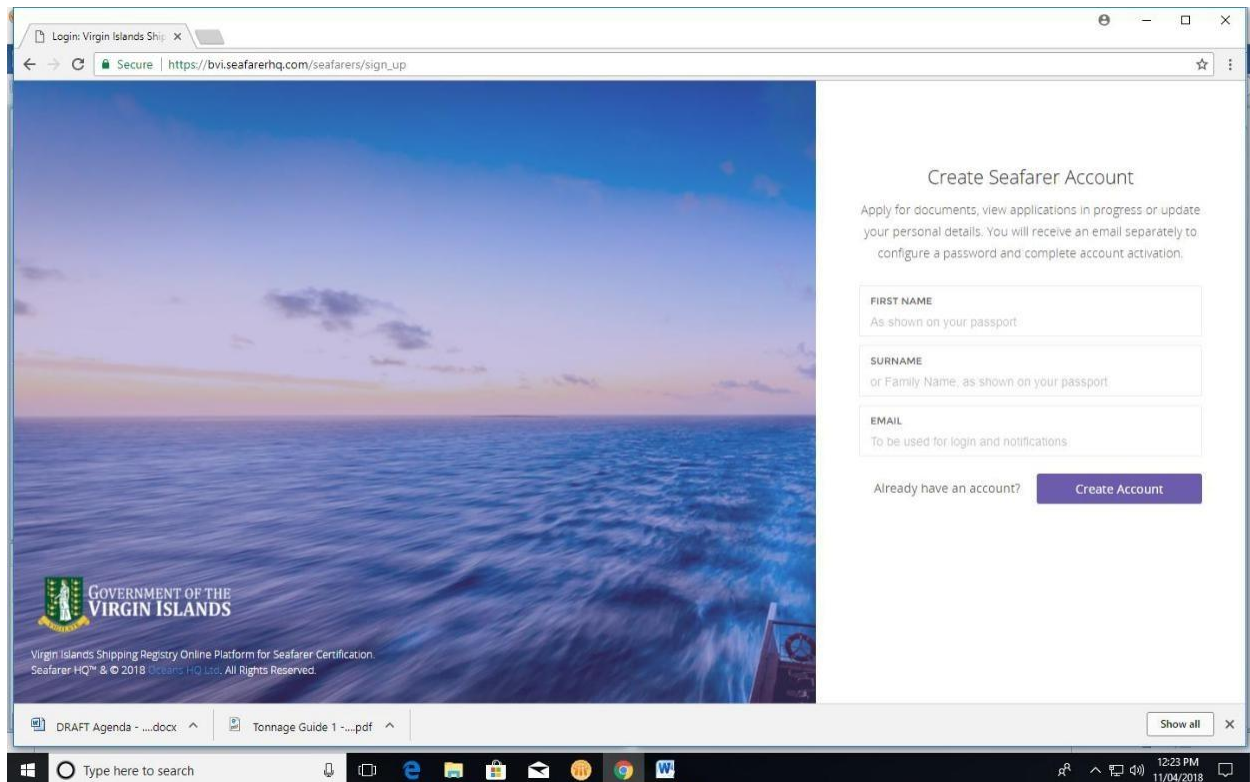
Once a profile is created and saved, applicants have an option to make an application for a document. Clicking on "apply for a seafarer document" will open a menu from which the required document can be selected. Selection will then open a new screen where the applicant will be asked to upload the required data.

Applicants for an endorsement need not to complete the address section, this is only required for discharge book applications and Boat master's license applications. The option to enter a mobile telephone number is optional.

The next section of the profile allows applicants to enter their identity documents and identity details. It looks like:

On making this selection there is a window where the vessel and agent can be identified.

This option is provided for internal use or for use by authorized agents making applications. It can be ignored by applicants who are individual seafarers making their own applications. They should simply click on APPLICATIONS and select from the options provided to apply for the document.

Instructions are provided on each page and on completion select "make application". This will notify the administration that an application has been received and allow them to process it.

Upon approval, the applicant will be able to return to the website and print out their CRAs. Payment for documents must be arranged with the VISR separately. After confirmation that payment has been received, the applicant will be able to log on and print their CRAs.
Applicants are advised to include courier arrangements with their discharge book applications.All other completed documents can be accessed online and printed.

These online generated documents will all have unique identification numbers to prevent fraudulent duplication. They will also save the stakeholders time and resources during application.

In the future it is intended that a process to allow immediate payment by credit card online will be available. This is, however, not yet ready so payment remotely will be made by bank transfer, credit card or by cash at the reception in the Tortola office. If paying by credit/debit card, applicants will be required to complete a credit card authorization form and submit by email to the BVI administration separately from each application. This is so that the full record of any credit card written authorization can be used correctly and will be destroyed after use.

Applications for CoC endorsements for use on BVI registered vessels

The BVI does not issue certificates of competency (CoC). To enable seafarers who hold certificates issued by other administrations to work on BVI registered vessels, they will have to apply for endorsements for their certificates.

List of countries whose certificates are accepted by the VISR for endorsement can be found [here](#)

Countries not on the list referred to above may be considered for recognition of their certificates on a case-by-case basis after consideration of various conditions inter alia, vessel operating area and type of vessel seafarer will be working on. The seafarer will be assessed with an oral examination by a VISR surveyor before a decision is made for acceptance of the certificate for endorsement.

Applications by authorized companies

Companies authorized by the administration will also be able to use the new system. They will receive an invitation from the administration to open their account and access the system. On setting up their account they will be able to create seafarer profiles in the manner described above and also apply from documents for each seafarer. Authorized companies will be billed monthly for the documents that they have applied for with each application identified by seafarer name and vessel assigned to assist with agent's internal billing.

Access

The new system is a cloud based system accessible at any time using any up to date web browser. BVI Shipping Registry would recommend using Chrome, Firefox, Safari or Opera as the browser of choice.

Any seafarer creating an account can access that account at any time using their email address and password to see the data that is saved.

All submitted data is encrypted immediately on being saved, both "in transit" and in storage. The data store is remote and heavily protected against unauthorized access to ensure maximum protection of the stored data. It is also subject to UK and EU data protection laws with which it is fully compliant and the operation of the data stores falls within the operating company's ISO 27001 certified system.

Mr. John Samuel,
Director
Virgin Islands Shipping Registry
Direct: 284 393 0000
Email: John.Samuel@bvimaritime.vg

Cc: BVI Ports Authority, VISAR, DDM, HM Customs & Excise, Fire & Rescue, USCG San Juan and St. Thomas.