
STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

1997 No. 2579

MERCHANT SHIPPING

**The Merchant Shipping (Limitation of Liability for
Maritime Claims) (Overseas Territories) Order 1997**

Made - - - - - *30th October 1997*
Coming into force - - - - - *30th November 1997*

Her Majesty, in exercise of the powers conferred on Her by section 315(2) of the Merchant Shipping Act 1995⁽¹⁾ and all other powers enabling Her in that behalf, is pleased, by and with the advice of Her Privy Council, to order, and it is hereby ordered, as follows:—

Citation and commencement

1. This Order may be cited as the Merchant Shipping (Limitation of Liability for Maritime Claims) (Overseas Territories) Order 1997 and shall come into force on 30th November 1997.

Implementation of the Limitation of Liability Convention

2. Sections 185 and 186 of and Schedule 7 to the Merchant Shipping Act 1995 shall extend to each of the Territories listed in Schedule 1 to this Order subject to the exceptions, adaptations and modifications specified in Schedule 2 to this Order; and any instrument made, or to be made, under paragraphs 3, 5(2), 8(1) or 13 of Part II of Schedule 7 to the Act shall also extend to each Territory.

Interpretation

3. In this Order, “the Territory” means any of the territories listed in Schedule 1 to this Order.

N. H. Nicholls
Clerk of the Privy Council

SCHEDULE 1
TO THE ORDER

Article 2

Anguilla
British Antarctic Territory
British Indian Ocean Territory
South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands

SCHEDULE 2
TO THE ORDER

Article 2

SECTIONS 185 AND 186 OF THE MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT 1995

Limitation of liability of shipowners, etc and salvors for maritime claims

Limitation of liability of maritime claims

185.—(1) The provisions of the Convention on Limitation of Liability for Maritime Claims 1976 as set out in Part I of Schedule 7 (in this section and Part II of that Schedule referred to as “the Convention”) shall have the force of law in the Territory.

(2) The provisions of Part II of that Schedule shall have effect in connection with the Convention, and subsection (1) above shall have effect subject to the provisions of that Part.

(3) The provisions having the force of law under this section shall apply in relation to Her Majesty’s ships as they apply in relation to other ships.

(4) The provisions having the force of law under this section shall not apply to any liability in respect of loss of life or personal injury caused to, or loss of or damage to any property of, a person who is on board the ship in question or employed in connection with that ship or with the salvage operations in question if—

- (a) he is so on board or employed under a contract of service governed by the law of the Territory; and
- (b) the liability arises from an occurrence which took place after the commencement of this Order.

In this subsection, “ship” and “salvage operations” have the same meaning as in the Convention.

Exclusion of liability

186.—(1) Subject to subsection (3) below, the owner of a British ship shall not be liable for any loss or damage in the following cases, namely—

- (a) where any property on board the ship is lost or damaged by reason of fire on board the ship; or
- (b) where any gold, silver, watches, jewels or precious stones on board the ship are lost or damaged by reason of theft, robbery or other dishonest conduct and their nature and value were not at the time of shipment declared by their owner or shipper to the owner or master of the ship in the bill of lading or otherwise in writing.

(2) Subject to subsection (3) below, where the loss or damage arises from anything done or omitted by a person in his capacity of master or member of the crew or (otherwise than in that

capacity) in the course of his employment as a servant of the owner of the ship, subsection (1) above shall also exclude the liability of—

- (a) the master, member of the crew or servant; and
- (b) in a case where the master or member of the crew is the servant of a person whose liability would not be excluded by that subsection apart from this paragraph, the person whose servant he is.

(3) This section does not exclude the liability of any person for any loss or damage resulting from any such personal act or omission of his as is mentioned in Article 4 of the Convention set out in Part I of Schedule 7.

(4) This section shall apply in relation to Her Majesty's ships as it applies in relation to other ships.

(5) In this section "owner", in relation to a ship, includes any part owner and any charterer, manager or operator of the ship.

SCHEDULE 7 TO
THE MERCHANT
SHIPPING ACT 1995

Article 2

CONVENTION ON LIMITATION OF LIABILITY FOR MARITIME CLAIMS 1976

PART I

TEXT OF CONVENTION

CHAPTER I.

THE RIGHT OF LIMITATION

ARTICLE 1

Persons entitled to limit liability

1. Shipowners and salvors, as hereinafter defined, may limit their liability in accordance with the rules of this Convention for claims set out in Article 2.

2. The term "shipowner" shall mean the owner, charterer, manager or operator of a seagoing ship.

3. Salvor shall mean any person rendering services in direct connection with salvage operations. Salvage operations shall also include operations referred to in Article 2, paragraph 1(d), (e) and (f).

4. If any claims set out in Article 2 are made against any person for whose act, neglect or default the shipowner or salvor is responsible, such person shall be entitled to avail himself of the limitation of liability provided for in this Convention.

5. In this Convention the liability of a shipowner shall include liability in an action brought against the vessel herself.

6. An insurer of liability for claims subject to limitation in accordance with the rules of this Convention shall be entitled to the benefits of this Convention to the same extent as the assured himself.

7. The act of invoking limitation of liability shall not constitute an admission of liability.

ARTICLE 2

Claims subject to limitation

1. Subject to Articles 3 and 4 the following claims, whatever the basis of liability may be, shall be subject to limitation of liability:

- (a) claims in respect of loss of life or personal injury or loss of or damage to property (including damage to harbour works, basins and waterways and aids to navigation), occurring on board or in direct connection with the operation of the ship or with salvage operations, and consequential loss resulting therefrom;
- (b) claims in respect of loss resulting from delay in the carriage by sea of cargo, passengers or their luggage;
- (c) claims in respect of other loss resulting from infringement of rights other than contractual rights, occurring in direct connection with the operation of the ship or salvage operations;
- (d) claims in respect of the raising, removal, destruction or the rendering harmless of a ship which is sunk, wrecked, stranded or abandoned, including anything that is or has been on board such ship;
- (e) claims in respect of the removal, destruction or the rendering harmless of the cargo of the ship;
- (f) claims of a person other than the person liable in respect of measures taken in order to avert or minimise loss for which the person liable may limit his liability in accordance with this Convention, and further loss caused by such measures.

2. Claims set out in paragraph 1 shall be subject to limitation of liability even if brought by way of recourse or for indemnity under a contract or otherwise. However, claims set out under paragraph 1(d), (e) and (f) shall not be subject to limitation of liability to the extent that they relate to remuneration under a contract with the person liable.

ARTICLE 3

Claims excepted from limitation

The rules of this Convention shall not apply to:

- (a) claims for salvage or contribution in general average;
- (b) claims for oil pollution damage within the meaning of the International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage dated 29th November 1969 or of any amendment or Protocol thereto which is in force;
- (c) claims subject to any international convention or national legislation governing or prohibiting limitation of liability for nuclear damage;
- (d) claims against the shipowner of a nuclear ship for nuclear damage;
- (e) claims by servants of the shipowner or salvor whose duties are connected with the ship or the salvage operations, including claims of their heirs, dependants or other persons entitled to make such claims, if under the law governing the contract of service between the shipowner or salvor and such servants the shipowner or salvor is not entitled to limit his liability in respect of such claims, or if he is by such law only permitted to limit his liability to an amount greater than that provided for in Article 6.

ARTICLE 4

Conduct barring limitation

A person liable shall not be entitled to limit his liability if it is proved that the loss resulted from his personal act or omission, committed with the intent to cause such loss, or recklessly and with knowledge that such loss would probably result.

ARTICLE 5

Counterclaims

Where a person entitled to limitation of liability under the rules of this Convention has a claim against the claimant arising out of the same occurrence, their respective claims shall be set off against each other and the provisions of this Convention shall only apply to the balance, if any.

CHAPTER II.

LIMITS OF LIABILITY

ARTICLE 6

The general limits

1. The limits of liability for claims other than those mentioned in Article 7, arising on any distinct occasion, shall be calculated as follows:

- (a) in respect of claims for loss of life or personal injury,
 - (i) 333,000 Units of Account for a ship with a tonnage not exceeding 500 tons,
 - (ii) for a ship with a tonnage in excess thereof, the following amount in addition to that mentioned in (i):
 - for each ton from 501 to 3,000 tons, 500 Units of Account;
 - for each ton from 3,001 to 30,000 tons, 333 Units of Account;
 - for each ton from 30,001 to 70,000 tons, 250 Units of Account, and
 - for each ton in excess of 70,000 tons, 167 Units of Account,
- (b) in respect of any other claims,
 - (i) 167,000 Units of Account for a ship with a tonnage not exceeding 500 tons,
 - (ii) for a ship with a tonnage in excess thereof, the following amount in addition to that mentioned in (i):
 - for each ton from 501 to 30,000 tons, 167 Units of Account;
 - for each ton from 30,001 to 70,000 tons, 125 Units of Account; and
 - for each ton in excess of 70,000 tons, 83 Units of Account.

2. Where the amount calculated in accordance with paragraph 1(a) is insufficient to pay the claims mentioned therein in full, the amount calculated in accordance with paragraph 1(b) shall be available for payment of the unpaid balance of claims under paragraph 1(a) and such unpaid balance shall rank rateably with claims mentioned under paragraph 1(b).

3. The limits of liability for any salvor not operating from any ship or for any salvor operating solely on the ship to, or in respect of which he is rendering salvage services, shall be calculated according to a tonnage of 1,500 tons.

ARTICLE 7

The limit for passenger claims

1. In respect of claims arising on any distinct occasion for loss of life or personal injury to passengers of a ship, the limit of liability of the shipowner thereof shall be an amount of 46,666 Units of Account multiplied by the number of passengers which the ship is authorised to carry according to the ship's certificate, but not exceeding 25 million Units of Account.

2. For the purpose of this Article “claims for loss of life or personal injury to passengers of a ship” shall mean any such claims brought by or on behalf of any person carried in that ship:

- (a) under a contract of passenger carriage, or
- (b) who, with the consent of the carrier, is accompanying a vehicle or live animals which are covered by a contract for the carriage of goods.

ARTICLE 8

Unit of Account

The Unit of Account referred to in Articles 6 and 7 is the special drawing right as defined by the International Monetary Fund. The amounts mentioned in Articles 6 and 7 shall be converted into the national currency of the State in which limitation is sought, according to the value of that currency at the date the limitation fund shall have been constituted, payment is made, or security is given which under the law of that State is equivalent to such payment.

ARTICLE 9

Aggregation of claims

1. The limits of liability determined in accordance with Article 6 shall apply to the aggregate of all claims which arise on any distinct occasion:

- (a) against the person or persons mentioned in paragraph 2 of Article 1 and any person for whose act, neglect or default he or they are responsible; or
- (b) against the shipowner of a ship rendering salvage services from that ship and the salvor or salvors operating from such ship and any person for whose act, neglect or default he or they are responsible; or
- (c) against the salvor or salvors who are not operating from a ship or who are operating solely on the ship to, or in respect of which, the salvage services are rendered and any person for whose act, neglect or default he or they are responsible.

2. The limits of liability determined in accordance with Article 7 shall apply to the aggregate of all claims subject thereto which may arise on any distinct occasion against the person or persons mentioned in paragraph 2 of Article 1 in respect of the ship referred to in Article 7 and any person for whose act, neglect or default he or they are responsible.

ARTICLE 10

Limitation of liability without constitution of a limitation fund

1. Limitation of liability may be invoked notwithstanding that a limitation fund as mentioned in Article 11 has not been constituted.

2. If limitation of liability is invoked without the constitution of a limitation fund, the provisions of Article 12 shall apply correspondingly.

3. Questions of procedure arising under the rules of this Article shall be decided in accordance with the national law of the State Party in which action is brought.

CHAPTER III.

THE LIMITATION FUND

ARTICLE 11

Constitution of the Fund

1. Any person alleged to be liable may constitute a fund with the Court or other competent authority in any State Party in which legal proceedings are instituted in respect of claims subject to limitation. The fund shall be constituted in the sum of such of the amounts set out in Articles 6 and 7 as are applicable to claims for which that person may be liable, together with interest thereon from the date of the occurrence giving rise to the liability until the date of the constitution of the fund. Any fund thus constituted shall be available only for the payment of claims in respect of which limitation of liability can be invoked.

2. A fund may be constituted, either by depositing the sum, or by producing a guarantee acceptable under the legislation of the State Party where the fund is constituted and considered to be adequate by the Court or other competent authority.

3. A fund constituted by one of the persons mentioned in paragraph 1(a), (b) or (c) or paragraph 2 of Article 9 or his insurer shall be deemed constituted by all persons mentioned in paragraph 1(a), (b) or (c) or paragraph 2, respectively.

ARTICLE 12

Distribution of the fund

1. Subject to the provisions of paragraphs 1 and 2 of Article 6 and of Article 7, the fund shall be distributed among the claimants in proportion to their established claims against the fund.

2. If, before the fund is distributed, the person liable, or his insurer, has settled a claim against the fund such person shall, up to the amount he has paid, acquire by subrogation the rights which the persons so compensated would have enjoyed under this Convention.

3. The right of subrogation provided for in paragraph 2 may also be exercised by persons other than those therein mentioned in respect of any amount of compensation which they may have paid, but only to the extent that such subrogation is permitted under the applicable national law.

4. Where the person liable or any other person establishes that he may be compelled to pay, at a later date, in whole or in part any such amount of compensation with regard to which such person would have enjoyed a right of subrogation pursuant to paragraphs 2 and 3 had the compensation been paid before the fund was distributed, the Court or other competent authority of the State where the fund has been constituted may order that a sufficient sum shall be provisionally set aside to enable such person at such later date to enforce his claim against the fund.

ARTICLE 13

Bar to other actions

1. Where a limitation fund has been constituted in accordance with Article 11, any person having made a claim against the fund shall be barred from exercising any right in respect of such a claim against any other assets of a person by or on behalf of whom the fund has been constituted.

2. After a limitation fund has been constituted in accordance with Article 11, any ship or other property, belonging to a person on behalf of whom the fund has been constituted, which has been arrested or attached within the jurisdiction of a State Party for a claim which may be raised against the fund, or any security given, may be released by order of the Court or other competent authority of such State. However, such release shall always be ordered if the limitation fund has been constituted:

- (a) at the port where the occurrence took place, or, if it took place out of port, at the first port of call thereafter; or
- (b) at the port of disembarkation in respect of claims for loss of life or personal injury; or
- (c) at the port of discharge in respect of damage to cargo; or

(d) in the State where the arrest is made.

3. The rules of paragraphs 1 and 2 shall apply only if the claimant may bring a claim against the limitation fund before the Court administering that fund and the fund is actually available and freely transferable in respect of that claim.

ARTICLE 14

Governing law

Subject to the provisions of this Chapter the rules relating to the constitution and distribution of a limitation fund, and all rules of procedure in connection therewith, shall be governed by the law of the State Party in which the fund is constituted.

CHAPTER IV.

SCOPE OF APPLICATION

ARTICLE 15

This Convention shall apply whenever any person referred to in Article 1 seeks to limit his liability before the Court of a State Party or seeks to procure the release of a ship or other property or the discharge of any security given within the jurisdiction of any such State.

PART II

PROVISIONS HAVING EFFECT IN CONNECTION WITH CONVENTION

Interpretation

1. In this Part of this Schedule any reference to a numbered article is a reference to the article of the Convention which is so numbered.

Right to limit liability

2. The right to limit liability under the Convention shall apply in relation to any ship whether seagoing or not, and the definition of “shipowner” in paragraph 2 of article 1 shall be construed accordingly.

Claims subject to limitation

3.—(1) Paragraph 1(d) of article 2 shall not apply unless provision has been made by an order of the Secretary of State for the setting up and management of a fund to be used for the making to harbour or conservancy authorities of payments needed to compensate them for the reduction, in consequence of the said paragraph 1(d), of amounts recoverable by them in claims of the kind there mentioned, and to be maintained by contributions from such authorities raised and collected by them in respect of vessels in like manner as other sums so raised by them.

(2) Any order under sub-paragraph (1) above may contain such incidental and supplemental provisions as appear to the Secretary of State to be necessary or expedient.

Claims excluded from limitation

4.—(1) The claims excluded from the Convention by paragraph (a) of article 3 include claims under article 14 of the International Convention on Salvage 1989 as set out in Part I of Schedule 11(2) and corresponding claims under a contract.

(2) The claims excluded from the Convention by paragraph (b) of article 3 are claims in respect of any liability incurred under section 153 of this Act(3).

...

The general limits

5.—(1) In the application of article 6 to a ship with a tonnage less than 300 tons that article shall effect as if—

- (a) paragraph 1(a)(i) referred to 166,667 Units of Account; and
- (b) paragraph 1(b)(i) referred to 83,333 Units of Account.

(2) For the purposes of article 6 and this paragraph a ship's tonnage shall be its gross tonnage calculated in such manner as may be prescribed by an order made by the Secretary of State.

(3) ...

Limit for passenger claims

6.—(1) In the case of a ship for which there is in force a Passenger Ship Safety Certificate or Passenger Certificate, as the case may be, issued under or recognised by safety regulations, the ship's certificate mentioned in paragraph 1 of article 7 shall be that certificate.

(2) In paragraph 2 of article 7 the reference to claims brought on behalf of a person includes a reference to any claim in respect of the death of a person.

Units of Account

7.—(1) For the purpose of converting the amounts mentioned in articles 6 and 7 from special drawing rights into sterling one special drawing right shall be treated as equal to such a sum in sterling as the International Monetary Fund have fixed as being the equivalent of one special drawing right for—

- (a) the relevant date under paragraph 1 of article 8; or
- (b) if no sum has been so fixed for that date, the last preceding date for which a sum has been so fixed.

(2) A certificate given by or on behalf of the Authority stating—

- (a) that a particular sum in sterling has been fixed as mentioned in sub-paragraph (1) above for a particular date; or
- (b) that no sum has been so fixed for that date and that a particular sum in sterling has been so fixed for a date which is the last preceding date for which a sum has been so fixed,

(2) Schedule 11 to the 1995 Act, which sets out the International Convention on Salvage 1989 was extended to the Territories by The Merchant Shipping (Salvage Convention) (Overseas Territories) Order 1997 (S.I. 1997/2586).

(3) Section 153 of the 1995 Act was extended to Anguilla by S.I. 1997/2580; to the British Antarctic Territory by S.I. 1997/2582; and to the British Indian Ocean Territory by S.I. 1997/2583; and to South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands by S.I. 1997 (2588).

shall be conclusive evidence of those matters for the purposes of those articles; and a document purporting to be such a certificate shall, in any proceedings, be received in evidence and, unless the contrary is proved, be deemed to be such a certificate.

- (3) For the purposes of this paragraph, “the Authority” means—
- (a) in Anguilla, the Director of Finance;
 - (b) in the British Antarctic Territory, the Commissioner;
 - (c) in the British Indian Ocean Territory, the Commissioner;
 - (d) in South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, the Financial Secretary.

Constitution of fund

8.—(1) The Secretary of State may, with the concurrence of the Treasury, by order prescribe the rate of interest to be applied for the purposes of paragraph 1 of article 11.

(2) ...

(3) Where a fund is constituted with the court in accordance with article 11 for the payment of claims arising out of any occurrence, the court may stay any proceedings relating to any claim arising out of that occurrence which are pending against the person by whom the fund has been constituted.

Distribution of fund

9. No lien or other right in respect of any ship or property shall affect the proportions in which under article 12 the fund is distributed among several claimants.

Bar to other actions

10. Where the release of a ship or other property is ordered under paragraph 2 of article 13 the person on whose application it is ordered to be released shall be deemed to have submitted to... the jurisdiction of the court to adjudicate on the claim for which the ship or property was arrested or attached.

Meaning of “court”

11. References in the Convention and the preceding provisions of this Part of this Schedule to the court are references to—

- (a) the High Court, in Anguilla;
- (b) the Supreme Court, in the British Antarctic Territory;
- (c) the Supreme Court, in the British Indian Ocean Territory.
- (d) the Supreme Court, in South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands.

Meaning of “ship”

12. References in the Convention and in the preceding provisions of this Part of this Schedule to a ship include references to any structure (whether completed or in course of completion) launched and intended for use in navigation as a ship or part of a ship.

Meaning of “State Party”

13. An Order in Council made for the purposes of this paragraph and declaring that any State specified in the Order is a party to the Convention shall, subject to the provisions of any subsequent Order made for those purposes, be conclusive evidence that the State is a party to the Convention.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Order)

This Order gives effect in Anguilla, the British Antarctic Territory, the British Indian Ocean Territory and South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands to the Convention on Limitation of Liability for Maritime Claims 1976, which lays down uniform rules relating to the liability of shipowners and salvors in respect of certain maritime claims.