



Bahamas Independence Act 1973

1973 CHAPTER 27

An Act to make provision for, and in connection with, the attainment by the Bahamas of fully responsible status within the Commonwealth. [14th June 1973]

1 Fully responsible status of Bahamas.

- (1) On and after 10th July 1973 (in this Act referred to as “the appointed day”) Her Majesty’s Government in the United Kingdom shall have no responsibility for the government of the Bahamas.
- (2) No Act of the Parliament of the United Kingdom passed on or after the appointed day shall extend, or be deemed to extend, to the Bahamas as part of their law; and on and after that day the provisions of Schedule 1 to this Act shall have effect with respect to the legislative powers of the Bahamas.

2 Consequential modifications of British Nationality Acts.

- (1) F1
- (2) F2
- (3) Except as provided by section 3 of this Act, any person who immediately before the appointed day—
 - (a) is a citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies by virtue of a certificate of naturalisation granted or registration effected by the Governor or Government of the Bahamas; and
 - (b) is also a citizen or national of another country,shall on that day cease to be a citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies whether or not he becomes on that day a citizen of the Bahamas.
- (4) Except as provided by section 3 of this Act and without prejudice to subsection (3) of this section, any person who—
 - (a) immediately before the appointed day is a citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies by virtue of any such certificate or registration as is mentioned in subsection (3)(a) of this section; and

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- (b) after that day becomes a citizen of the Bahamas under any such provisions as are mentioned in subsection (5) of this section,
shall cease to be a citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies on the date on which he becomes a citizen of the Bahamas under those provisions.
- (5) The provisions mentioned in subsection (4)(b) of this section are any provisions of an Order in Council made after the passing of this Act under the ^{M1}Bahamas Islands (Constitution) Act 1963 whereby a person becomes, or is entitled to become, a citizen of the Bahamas after the appointed day by reason of his being immediately before that day a citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies by virtue of any such certificate or registration as is mentioned in subsection (3)(a) of this section or by reason of his possessing immediately before that day Bahamian status as defined in section 128 of the Constitution set out in the Schedule to the ^{M2}Bahamas Islands (Constitution) Order 1969.
- (6) ^{F2}
- (7) The references in this section to a person who is a citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies by virtue of any such certificate as is mentioned in subsection (3)(a) of this section shall include references to a person who has become a person naturalised in the United Kingdom and Colonies by virtue of section 32(6) of the ^{M3}British Nationality Act 1948 (persons given local naturalisation in a colony or protectorate before the commencement of that Act) in its application to the Bahamas.

Textual Amendments

- F1** S. 2(1) repealed by [British Nationality Act 1981 \(c. 61, SIF 87\)](#), [Sch. 9](#)
F2 S. 2(2)(6) repealed by [British Nationality Act 1981 \(c. 61, SIF 87\)](#), [Sch. 9](#)
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Marginal Citations

- M1** 1963 c. 56.
M2 S.I. 1969/590.
M3 1948 c. 56.

3 Retention of citizenship of United Kingdom and Colonies by certain persons connected with the Bahamas.

- (1) Subject to subsection (5) of this section, a person shall not cease to be a citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies under section 2 of this Act if he, his father or his father's father—
- was born in the United Kingdom or in a colony ^{F3} . . . ; or
 - is or was a person naturalised in the United Kingdom and Colonies; or
 - was registered as a citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies; or
 - became a British subject by reason of the annexation of any territory included in a colony.
- (2) A person shall not cease to be a citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies under the said section 2 if either—
- he was born in a protectorate or protected state; or
 - his father or his father's father was so born and is or at any time was a British subject.

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- (3) A woman who immediately before the appointed day is the wife of a citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies—
- (a) shall not cease to be such a citizen under the said section 2 unless her husband either does so at the same time or has already done so; and
 - (b) if she would, apart from paragraph (a) of this subsection, have ceased to be such a citizen under that section at any time and her husband subsequently ceases to be such a citizen under that section, she shall cease to be such a citizen when her husband does so.
- (4) Subject to subsection (5) of this section, the reference in subsection (1)(b) of this section to a person naturalised in the United Kingdom and Colonies shall include a reference to a person who would, if living immediately before the commencement of the ^{M4}British Nationality Act 1948, have become a person naturalised in the United Kingdom and Colonies by virtue of section 32(6) of that Act.
- (5) In this section—
- (a) references to a colony shall be construed as not including references to any territory which, on the appointed day, is not a colony for the purposes of the ^{M5}British Nationality Act 1948 as that Act has effect on that day, and accordingly do not include references to the Bahamas, and
 - (b) references to a protectorate or protected state shall be construed as not including references to any territory which, on the appointed day, is not a protectorate or a protected state (as the case may be) for the purposes of that Act as it has effect on that day;

and subsection (1) of this section shall not apply to a person by virtue of any certificate of naturalisation granted or registration effected by the Governor or Government of a territory which by virtue of this subsection is excluded from references in this section to a colony, protectorate or protected state.

Textual Amendments

F3 Words in s. 3(1)(a) repealed (8.11.1995) by 1995 c. 44, s. 1(1), **Sch. 1 Pt. II** Gp. 1

Marginal Citations

M4 1948 c. 56.

M5 1948 c. 56.

4 ^{F4}(1)

^{F5}(2)

(3) On and after the appointed day the provisions specified in Schedule 2 to this Act shall have effect subject to the amendments specified respectively in that Schedule.

(4) Subsection (3) of this section, and Schedule 2 to this Act, shall not extend to the Bahamas as part of their law.

Textual Amendments

F4 S. 4(1) repealed by **Interpretation Act 1978** (c. 30, SIF 115:1), **Sch. 3**

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F5 S. 4(2) repealed (28.3.2009 for specified purposes, 31.10.2009 in so far as not already in force) by [Armed Forces Act 2006 \(c. 52\)](#), s. 383(2), [Sch. 17](#); S.I. 2009/812, art. 3(a)(b) (with transitional provisions in S.I. 2009/1059); S.I. 2009/1167, art. 4

5 ^{F6}

Textual Amendments

F6 S. 5 repealed by [Statute Law \(Repeals\) Act 1986 \(c. 12\)](#), s. 1(1), [Sch. 1 Pt. XI](#)

6 Interpretation.

- (1) In this Act, and in any amendment made by this Act in any other enactment, “the Bahamas” means the territories which immediately before the appointed day constitute the Colony of the Commonwealth of the Bahama Islands and which on and after that day are to be called the Commonwealth of the Bahamas.
- (2) Part III of the ^{M6}British Nationality Act 1948 (interpretation etc.) as in force at the passing of this Act shall have effect for the purposes of sections 2 and 3 of this Act as if they were included in that Act.
- (3) References in this Act to any enactment are references to that enactment as amended or extended by or under another enactment.

Marginal Citations

M6 1948 c. 56.

7 Short title, repeal and extent.

- (1) This Act may be cited as the Bahamas Independence Act 1973.
- (2) The ^{M7}Bahama Islands (Constitution) Act 1963 is hereby repealed as from the appointed day but not so as to affect the operation as part of the law of the Bahamas of any Order in Council made by virtue of that Act before that day.
- ^{F7}(3)

Textual Amendments

F7 S. 7(3) repealed (8.11.1995) by [1995 c. 44](#), s. 1(1), [Sch. 1 Pt. II](#) Gp. 2

Marginal Citations

M7 1963 c. 56.

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SCHEDULES

SCHEDULE 1

Section 1.

LEGISLATIVE POWERS OF BAHAMAS

- 1 The ^{M8}Colonial Laws Validity Act 1865 shall not apply to any law made on or after the appointed day by the legislature of the Bahamas.

Marginal Citations

M8 1865 c. 63.

- 2 No law and no provision of any law made on or after the appointed day by that legislature shall be void or inoperative on the ground that it is repugnant to the law of England, or to the provisions of any Act of the Parliament of the United Kingdom, including this Act, or to any order, rule or regulation made under any such Act, and accordingly the powers of that legislature shall include the power to repeal or amend any such Act, order, rule or regulation in so far as it is part of the law of the Bahamas.
- 3 The legislature of the Bahamas shall have full power to make laws having extra-territorial operation.
- 4 Without prejudice to the generality of the preceding provisions of this Schedule—
^{F8}(a)
(b) section 4 of the ^{M9}Colonial Courts of Admiralty Act 1890 (which requires certain laws to be reserved for the signification of Her Majesty's pleasure or to contain a suspending clause) and so much of section 7 of that Act as requires the approval of Her Majesty in Council to any rules of court for regulating the practice and procedure of a Colonial Court of Admiralty shall cease to have effect in the Bahamas.

Textual Amendments

F8 Sch. 1 para. 4(a) repealed (1.1.1996) by 1995 c. 21, ss. 314(1), 316(2), **Sch. 12** (with ss. 312(1), Sch. 14 para. 1)

Marginal Citations

M9 1890 c. 27.

*Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects
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SCHEDULE 2

Section 4.

AMENDMENTS NOT AFFECTING THE LAW OF THE BAHAMAS

Diplomatic immunities

1 F9

Textual Amendments

F9 Sch. 2 para. 1 repealed by [International Organisations Act 1981 \(c. 9, SIF 68:1\)](#), **Sch.**

Financial

2 In section 2(4) of the ^{M10}Import Duties Act 1958, before the words “together with” there shall be inserted the words “the Bahamas”.

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

C1 The text of Sch. 2 para. 2 is in the form in which it was originally enacted: it was not reproduced in Statutes in Force and, except as specified, does not reflect any amendments or repeals which may have been made prior to 1.2.1991

Marginal Citations

M10 [1958 c. 6](#)

Visiting forces

3 In the ^{M11}Visiting Forces (British Commonwealth) Act 1933, section 4 (attachment and mutual powers of command) shall apply in relation to forces raised in the Bahamas as it applies to forces raised in Dominions within the meaning of the ^{M12}Statute of Westminster 1931.

Marginal Citations

M11 [1933 c. 6](#).

M12 [1931 c. 4 \(22 & 23 Geo. 5\)](#).

4 In the ^{M13}Visiting Forces Act 1952—

(a) in section 1(1)(a) (countries to which the Act applies) at the end there shall be added the words “the Bahamas or”;

(b) in section 10(1)(a), the expression “colony” shall not include the Bahamas; and, until express provision with respect to the Bahamas is made by an Order in Council under section 8 of that Act (application to visiting forces of law relating to home forces), any such Order for the time being in force shall be deemed to apply to visiting forces of the Bahamas.

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Modifications etc. (not altering text)

C2 The text of Sch. 2 para. 4(a) is in the form in which it was originally enacted: it was not reproduced in Statutes in Force and does not reflect any amendments or repeals which may have been made prior to 1.2.1991.

Marginal Citations

M13 1952 c. 67.

Ships and aircraft

F10₅

Textual Amendments

F10 Sch. 2 para. 5 repealed (1.1.1996) by 1995 c. 21, ss. 314(1), 316(2), **Sch. 12** (with ss. 312(1), Sch. 14 para. 1)

6 **F11**

Textual Amendments

F11 Sch. 2 para. 6 repealed by Statute Law (Repeals) Act 1977 (c. 18), **Sch. 1 Pt. XV**

7 In the ^{M14}Whaling Industry (Regulation) Act 1934, the expression “British ship to which this Act applies” shall not include a British ship registered in the Bahamas.

Marginal Citations

M14 1934 c. 49.

8 **F12**

Textual Amendments

F12 Sch. 2 para. 8 repealed by Civil Aviation (Amendment) Act 1982 (c. 1, SIF 9), **Sch. 2**

Colonial stock

F13₉

Textual Amendments

F13 Sch. 2 para. 9 repealed (19.11.1998) by 1998 c. 43, s. 1(1), **Sch. 1 Pt. IV** Gp. 1

Commonwealth Institute

F14₁₀

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for the Bahamas Independence Act 1973. (See end of Document for details)*

Textual Amendments

F14 [Sch. 2 para. 10](#) repealed (7.1.2003) by [2002 c. 39, ss. 3, 4\(2\)](#), [Sch. 3](#)

Changes to legislation:

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