

## **A-2:INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON LOAD LINES**

**Name of the convention:** International Convention on Load Lines

**Acronym or short name:** LL (Load Lines)

**International organisation in charge of it:** International Maritime Organization (IMO)

**Summary description :** The limitations on the draught to which a ship may be loaded make a significant contribution to her safety. These limits are given in the form of freeboards, which constitute, besides external weather-tight and watertight integrity, the main objective of the Convention.

In the 1966 Load Lines Convention, adopted by IMO, provisions are made determining the freeboard of ships by subdivision and damage stability calculations.

The regulations take into account the potential hazards present in different zones and different seasons. The technical Annex contains several additional safety measures concerning doors, freeing ports, hatchways and other items. The main purpose of these measures is to ensure the watertight integrity of ships' hulls below the freeboard deck.

All assigned load lines must be marked amidships on each side of the ship, together with the deck line. Ships intended for the carriage of timber deck cargo are assigned a smaller freeboard as the deck cargo provides protection against the impact of waves.

The Convention includes following Annexes.

**Annex I:** covers Conditions of assignment of freeboard, Freeboards and Special requirements for ships assigned timber freeboards

**Annex II:** covers Zones, areas and seasonal periods

**Annex III:** contains certificates, including the International Load Line Certificate

**Date of first adopted:** 5 April 1966

**Date of coming into force:** 21 July 1968

**Major revisions or Amendments:**

**The 1988 Protocol:** Entry into force 3 Feb.2000

The Protocol was primarily adopted in order to harmonize the Convention's survey and certification requirement with those contained in SOLAS and MARPOL 73/78.

The harmonized system alleviates the problems caused by survey dates and intervals between surveys which do not coincide, so that a ship should no longer have to go into port or repair yard for a survey required by one Convention shortly after doing the same thing in connection with another instrument.

**The 1988 Protocol** revised certain regulations in the technical Annexes to the Load Lines Convention and introduced the tacit amendment procedure. Amendments to the Convention may be considered either by the Maritime Safety Committee or by a Conference of Parties.

**The 2003 Amendments:** Entry into force 1 Jan. 2005

**The Amendments to Annex B to the 1988 Load Lines Protocol** include a number of important revisions, in particular to regulations concerning: strength and intact stability of ships; definitions; superstructure and bulkheads; doors; position of hatchways, doorways and ventilators; hatchway coamings; hatch covers; machinery space openings; miscellaneous openings in freeboard and superstructure decks etc.

The Amendments, which amount to a comprehensive revision of the technical regulations of the original Load Lines Convention, will not affect the 1966 LL Convention and will only apply to those ships flying the flags of States Party to the 1988 LL Protocol.

**Applicability (situation of ratification):** The Convention shall come into force 12 months after the date on which not less than 15 States, including 7 each with not less than 1 million gross tons

of shipping, have signed without reservation as to acceptance or deposited instruments of acceptance or accession in accordance with article 24.

**LL 1966:** 161 States 99.19% of world tonnage (as of 2 Dec. 2013)

**LL Protocol 1988:** 98 States, 95.96% of world tonnage (as of 2 Dec. 2013)

**Stakes for ports:** Ports are involved in the “survey, inspection and marking” of ships under the LL convention ([art.13](#)).

According to article 14, ships shall be subjected to different kind of surveys and inspections: survey before the ship is put into service, a renewal survey ([art.14](#), Protocol of LL Convention 1988), and an annual survey.

Port State Authorities have to verify the validity of **International LL Certificate** issued to every ship which has been surveyed and marked in accordance with the present Convention ([art.16](#)).

Port State Control Officers “duly authorized” by the Port State Authority of Contracting Parties ensure control that there is on board a valid certificate. The control is limited to the purpose of determining that: the ship is not loaded beyond the limits allowed by the certificate; position of the load line of the ship corresponds with its certificate; the ship has not been altered in respect of the matters set out that the ship is manifestly unfit to proceed to sea without danger to human life ([art.21](#)).

**Links with other conventions:** [SOLAS](#), [MARPOL 73/78](#), [HSSC](#),

**Key-words:** load lines, regulation, international voyage, certificate, freeboard, survey, control

**Internet hyperlink with other website:**

<http://www.imo.org/>

<http://www.comitemaritime.org/>

(full text) <http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/other/dfat/treaties/1968/23.html>

(Protocol of 1988) [Protocol of 1988 relating to the International Convention on Load Lines, 1966](#)