



Will boats in Greece become a tax target?

# Threat of punishing Greek cruising tax fades

**Port police ordered to "await further instructions" on collection of tax on boaters**

to collect a punitive cruising tax on boaters, both foreign and domestic. In Greece were thrown into disarray as *MBY* went to press by the news that the Greek government had ordered all port police to "await further instructions".

This has been translated by the Cruising Association (CA) and RYA, two of the key organisations in this regard, as fighting the corner of touring yachts and boats, as an indefinite suspension of the levy. The motivation for the "suspension" was not clear when *MBY* went to press, but it is expected that the government is trying to figure out a way to exempt

foreign boaters from the tax, given that it was designed to collect money from notoriously tax-shy Greeks.

There are actually two taxes, but the one that currently has the greatest implications for motorboaters – known as Part 3 – is a one-off levy of €300 per metre for the first 10 metres of your vessel.

Crucially, however, the one-off charges only apply to boats longer than 10 metres that were in Greece on or after March 1, 2009. If it can be proved that you were, and that you spent more than 40 days cumulatively in Greek waters between January 1, 2009 and November 15, 2009, then you're

potentially liable. If these criteria don't match your personal circumstances, then you'll escape the levy.

This latest twist in the tale might offer a complete reprieve for foreign boaters in Greek waters, and the CA and RYA recommend that if challenged to pay, you quote "signal reference number 131010/05-10". This refers to the *communiqué* sent to the port police from the chief port police officer advising them to stop collecting the tax.

You're also asked if challenged to email the CA on [office@crusing.org.uk](mailto:office@crusing.org.uk) and the RYA on [boating.abroad@rya.org.uk](mailto:boating.abroad@rya.org.uk) to report the incident.

## Spanish VAT hike

**Tax expert slams plan**

A Spanish marine tax expert has hit out at his government's move to hike VAT to 18%.

The decision will see Spanish residents and those commercially active in Spain forced to pay a 30% premium on the value of their vessels, as the new 18% rate of VAT will be added to the already unpopular 12% matriculation tax. The 2% increase in VAT is expected to be introduced in July.

Alex Chumillas from Lurismarine said: "The thought of having to pay 30% on top of a yacht's value is discouraging not only for brokers but also clients.

"Owning a yacht will become more and more exclusive and only for rich people. The final conclusion is that this decision is completely wrong and will bring more difficulties to the Spanish."

The decision to hike VAT has been taken to try to bring the nation's finances under control, and in a country where unemployment is running at 20%. VAT is seen as an easy target. But it's especially bad news for buyers of boats in Spain, because the matriculation or 'luxury' tax already applies to boats.

"The Government's decision will bring more difficulties to the marine industry," Chumillas said.



Chumillas: VAT hike is bad news.

## REASONS TO HEAD FOR THE MED

Croatia is being billed as "the Mediterranean as it once was" by new travel firm Simply Croatia. It may have a point. The Croatian coastline is stunning, with countless bays, crystal-clear waters and ancient towns. One way of exploring the wonders is by boat charter, which is just one of the things Simply Croatia can help you with. But if you're just looking to relax in a villa, or do something a little bit more creative, the company can help you with that too. For more, visit [www.simply-croatia.co.uk](http://www.simply-croatia.co.uk).



## Sealine South of France

**British builder appoints Ancasta to run Med office**

Sealine have appointed Ancasta to run their sales office in the South of France. The operation, known as Sealine Côte d'Azur, is based by the harbour at La Napoule, near Cannes.

The tie-up between Ancasta and Sealine is now 2½ years old, and resulted in a customer service award for Ancasta at the Motor Boat of the

Year Awards in January this year. Nicholas Turner, sales and marketing director for Sealine, says: "I am delighted that Ancasta will be representing us in this key area of France. They have an excellent track record in the UK and will be bringing their skills and expertise to this very important market."