

4 ALBERT EMBANKMENT  
LONDON SE1 7SR  
Telephone: +44 (0)20 7735 7611 Fax: +44 (0)20 7587 3210

Circular Letter No.4239  
27 March 2020

To: All IMO Members  
Intergovernmental organizations  
Non-governmental organizations in consultative status

Subject: **Communications from the Governments of:**  
i **The People's Republic of Bangladesh;**  
ii **The Sultanate of Oman; and**  
iii **The Independent State of Samoa**

The Governments of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, the Sultanate of Oman and the Independent State of Samoa have sent the attached communications, dated 23 March, 26 March and 24 March 2020 respectively, with the request that they are circulated by the Organization.

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**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**

Department of Shipping

141-143 Motijheel C/A (8<sup>th</sup> Floor), Dhaka-1000

Phone: 9513305

Fax :9587301

E-mail: info@dos.gov.bd

Web-site: www.dos.gov.bd



No. 18.17.0000.025.99.002.2018/ 1590

Date : 23.03.2020

✓ The Secretary General  
International Maritime Organization  
4 Albert Embankment  
London SE1 7SR

**Subject: Circular relating to certification of ships and seafarers for Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic.**

His Excellency Secretary General,

Maritime Administration of Bangladesh are following all your circulars Guidelines and instructions for the shipping sector for compliance. We appreciate your prudent guidance and instructions in this respect. Keeping pace with the guidance issued form IMO, Department of Shipping, the Maritime Administration of Bangladesh have promulgated a circular for the shipping community, the same may be found in the attached **Circular relating to certification of ships and seafarers for Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic.**

For your kind information and necessary action please.

With Respectful Regards

Commodore Syed Ariful Islam, (TAS), ndc, psc, BN  
Director General

Copy to: Secretary, Ministry of Shipping, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.



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Department of Shipping

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Circular Number: 01/2020

Issue Date: 23-03-2020

To: Ship owners, managers, operators, masters, Officers, Crew, recognized organizations, Certifying Authorities, PSCO's, agents and the Shipping community,

**CIRCULAR RELATING TO CERTIFICATION OF SHIPS AND SEAFARERS FOR CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) PANDEMIC.**

The spread of the coronavirus has placed the entire world in an unprecedented situation. To slow the spread of the disease and mitigate its impacts, travel is being curtailed and borders are being closed. Transport hubs are being affected. Ports are being closed and ships denied entry.

The actions taken worldwide as a result of the outbreak pose a serious challenge for administrations to allow the continued training of seafarers, revalidate certificates, including medical certificates and issuance of endorsements attesting recognition of certificates in accordance with the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for seafarers (STCW Convention), 1978, as amended.

The prevailing situation would have direct affect on the following aspects of the shipping community.

- (a) the continued training of seafarers, revalidation of certificates, including medical certificates, and issuance of endorsements attesting recognition of certificates in accordance with the

International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for seafarers (STCW Convention), 1978, as amended;

(b) Continuous Discharge Certificate (CDC) and Service period of Bangladeshi seafarers; and

(c) All matters related to ships surveys, inspections, certifications and/or renewal of statutory certificates;

(d) Lockdown, Curfew, Quarantine, Denial, Embarkation and Disembarkation, refusal, isolation measures imposed by various authorities is causing seafarers retention on board for unexpected period and the seafarers passport and other travel documents are expiring.

Considering the COVID-19 Pandemic situation Department of Shipping Bangladesh Promulgate following circular to the Bangladeshi shipping community.

## 1. **General Guidance:**

Information on COVID-19 relevant to the maritime industry can be found on the following websites:

- (a) International Maritime Organization ([www.imo.org](http://www.imo.org))
- (b) International Maritime Health Association ([www.imha.net](http://www.imha.net))
- (c) World Health Organization ([www.who.int](http://www.who.int))
- (d) International Chamber of Shipping ([www.ich-shipping.org](http://www.ich-shipping.org))
- (e) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare of Bangladesh ([www.mohfw.gov.bd](http://www.mohfw.gov.bd))
- (f) Directorate General of Health and Family Welfare of Bangladesh ([www.dghs.gov.bd](http://www.dghs.gov.bd))

Specific guidance for ship operators for the protection of the health of seafarers is available in IMO Circular Letter No.4204. Please note

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this circular letter is being regularly updated, the latest version is available on the International Maritime Organization's website.

**2. Seafarer's Certification:**

Certificates of Competency (CoC) and Certificates of Proficiency (CoP) which will be expired before 30th April 2020 will be granted a general extension till 30th June 2020. Seafarers will not be required to apply for the extension.

Consideration will be given to allow seafarers who hold foreign issued Certificates of Competencies (CoC) to continue serving onboard Bangladesh Registered Ships, if they are unable to revalidate their CoC before the expiry date due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Bangladesh Registered Ships owners and managers may submit such request in-writing to Department of Shipping (DoS), accompanied with a confirmation of continued validity from the issuing authority of the seafarer's CoC.

**3. Minimum Safe Manning Document (MSMD)**

Where it can be demonstrated that a crew member is required to depart a vessel owing to the COVID-19 and unable to be replaced, exemptions to MSMD will be considered on a case by case basis and should be supported by risk assessments from the company.

**4. Medical certificate:**

If a medical certificate expires whilst the seafarer is at sea, the certificate is allowed to remain in force until the next port of call where the seafarer can obtain a medical certificate from a qualified medical practitioner. This is permitted for up to 30th June 2020. If a seafarer is urgently required to join a ship with an expired medical certificate, the Department of Shipping (DoS) must be contacted to request permission.

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**5. Continues Discharge Certificate (CDC):**

Continues Discharge Certificate (CDC) which will be expired before 30th April 2020 will be granted a general extension till 30th June 2020. Seafarers will not be required to apply for the extension.

**6. Extension of Seafarers Employment Agreements (SEA):**

The Seafarers Employment Agreements (SEA) should remain valid. The company should explain to the seafarers as to why they need to remain on board. If any of the SEA's have expired, they need to be extended or new ones issued. The company need to ensure that the seafarers are sent home at the first available opportunity. Evidence should be retained by both the seafarer and the Company clearly demonstrating the reason why the Seafarer was asked to extend their contract.

**7. Extension of mandatory surveys, audits and expiry of statutory certificates:**

Statutory certificates which will be expired before 30th April 2020 will be granted a general extension till 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020. Owners or operators of Bangladesh Registered ships will not required to apply for the extension.

**8. Port State Control Measures:**

Port State Control officers are instructed to take a pragmatic and practical approach in relation to these certificates and endorsement extensions and their acceptance in the excise of Port State Control procedures.



Commodore Syed Ariful Islam, (TAS), ndc, psc, BN  
Director General



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



Sultanate of Oman  
Ministry of Transport  
Directorate General of Maritime Affairs

سَلْطَنَةُ عُومَانِ  
وَزَارَةُ النَّقْلِ  
المديرة العامة للشؤون البحرية

Ref. MoT/Maritime Affairs/DG/106/2020  
Date: 26.03.2020

الرقم :  
التاريخ :  
الموافق :

H.E. Mr. Kitack Lim,  
Secretary General,  
International Maritime Organization,  
4 Albert Embankment,  
London, SE1 7SR  
United Kingdom

**Subject: Measures taken to mitigate effects of the Coronavirus (COVID-19)  
outbreak on seafarers' employment**

Dear Excellency,

The Ministry of Transport of the Sultanate of Oman presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the International Maritime Organization and advises that, pursuant to the IMO Circular letter No. 4204/Add.5 has published Maritime circular No.4 aimed at lessening the impact of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak on the employment of those seafarers who are holding documents issued by, or under the authority of, this Maritime Administration.

To this end, I would like to request the Secretariat of the International Maritime Organization to kindly disseminate the attached information among the member states.

I avail myself of this opportunity to renew the assurance of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,

**Dr. Rashid Mohammed Hamad AL-Kiyumi**  
Director General for Maritime Affairs





Sultanate of Oman  
Ministry of Transport  
Directorate General of Maritime Affairs

سَلْطَنَةُ عُمَانِ  
وَزَارَةُ النَّقْلِ  
الْمَدِيرِيَّةُ الْعَامَّةُ لِلشُّؤُنِ الْبَحْرِيَّةِ

تعميم رقم : ٤ / ٢٠٢٠

بتاريخ : ٢٩ رجب ١٤٤١ هـ الموافق : ٢٤ / ٣ / ٢٠٢٠

Maritime Circular No: 4 / 2020  
Date: 24 / 03 / 2020

To: - Seafarers

- Ship owners
- Maritime Administrations
- PSC Officers

إلى: جميع البحارة

إلى: ملاك السفن

إلى: الإدارات البحرية

إلى: مفتشي السفن

**Sub; Extension validity of the Seafarers' documents due to COVID-19 outbreak**

Based on the decisions of the Oman Supreme Committee in respect of preventing measures to mitigate the outbreak of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and pursuant to the IMO Circular letter No. 4204/Add.5 on Guidance relating to the certification of seafarer, please be advised that the validity of the following documents issued by, or under the authority of, this Directorate General, that terminated, or will be terminated in coming months, are hereby extended until **June 30<sup>th</sup>**, 2020;

**الموضوع: تمديد صلاحية شهادات ووثائق البحارة**

**بسبب انتشار فيروس كورونا (كوفيد ١٩)**

بناء على قرار اللجنة العليا المكلفة ببحث الية التعامل مع التطورات الناتجة عن إنتشار فيروس كورونا (كوفيد ١٩) والى تعميم المنظمة البحرية الدولية رقم (4204/Add.5) بشأن التعليمات المتعلقة بشهادات البحارة ، يرجى العلم بأن صلاحية الشهادات و وثائق البحارة المذكورة أدناه المنتهية الصلاحية أو التي تنتهي صلاحيتها خلال الاشهر القادمة و الصادرة من هذه الوزارة أو الجهات المخولة منها ، تم تمديد صلاحيتها حتى تاريخ ٣٠ يونيو ٢٠٢٠:



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



Sultanate of Oman  
Ministry of Transport  
Directorate General of Maritime Affairs

سُلْطَانَةُ عُومَانِ  
وَزَارَةُ النِّقْلِ  
المديرية العامة للشؤون البحرية

- .1 Certificates of Competency; .1 شهادة الكفاءة البحرية .
- .2 Certificates of Proficiency; .2 شهادة الاهلية .
- .3 Seafarers' Medical fitness certificate; .3 شهادة اللياقة الطبية .
- .4 Recognition endorsement; .4 إقرار الاعتراف .
- .5 Recognition documents (For service in Domestic Voyages); and .5 وثيقة الاعتراف (للعمل في الرحلات المحلية) .
- .6 Seafarers' Identification Document. .6 وثيقة هوية البحار .

Dr. Rashid Mohammed Hamed Al kiyumi  
Director General for Maritime Affairs

د. راشد بن محمد بن حمد الكيومي  
مدير عام الشؤون البحرية البحري



Tel : (685) 21 611  
Fax : (685) 21990  
Private Bag, MWTI  
Website: [www.mwti.gov.ws](http://www.mwti.gov.ws)  
Level 4, TATTE Building, SOGI



Please, address all Correspondence to the  
Secretary for Transport/ Chief Executive  
Officer

File Ref:

GOVERNMENT OF SAMOA  
**MINISTRY OF WORKS, TRANSPORT & INFRASTRUCTURE**

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24 March 2020

General Manager/CEO, Samoa Shipping Corporation  
General Manager/CEO, Samoa Ports Authority  
General Manager/CEO, Samoa Shipping Services

Afioga e,

**Certificates of Competency for all Samoan Seafarers**

Due to the global pandemic devastating many countries of the world and its potential occurrence here in Samoa, the Ministry as the Maritime Administration, has decided for all Certificates of Competency (CoC) issued to Samoan seafarers on board local and foreign vessels expiring on or before 30 April 2020, are granted a general extension of up to three (3) months. This means, the individual seafarer will not be required to submit an application for revalidation.

The above general extension may be reviewed from time to time as necessary and appropriate.

Please contact the ACEO Maritime on telephone 22141 or email [maritime@mwti.gov.ws](mailto:maritime@mwti.gov.ws) for any further clarification of the above direction.

Ma le fa'aaloalo,

  
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Magele Hoc-Viali  
**Chief Executive Officer/Secretary for Transport**