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Circular Letter No.4254
7 April 2020

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

Subject: **Communication from the Republic of India**

The Government of the Republic of India has sent the attached communications, dated 23 March and 3 April 2020, with the request that they are circulated by the Organization.



भारत सरकार / GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
पोत परिवहन मंत्रालय / MINISTRY OF SHIPPING

नौवहन महानिदेशालय, मुंबई
DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF SHIPPING, MUMBAI

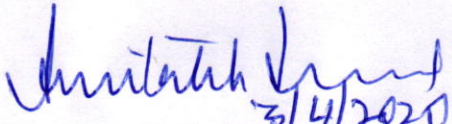
Addendum No.1 to DGS Order 6 of 2020

NO: ENG/Misc-29(73)/09	Dated: 03.04.2020
Subject: Regarding Extension to the validity of seafarers' CoC and Statutory Certificates, periodical Surveys and Audits of Indian Registered Ships in view of COVID 19 outbreak.	

1. Many IMO Conventions does not, specifically, allow extension of Surveys, audits and inspections such as Annual / Intermediate/ periodical Statutory Surveys beyond the window period and Docking Surveys beyond the period of 36 months after the last Docking Survey and only allow extension of Renewal surveys by 3-months under special circumstances. Similarly, the STCW 78 Convention as amended does not allow extension of Seafarer Certificates beyond expiry date.
2. Considering the prevailing COVID-19 situation and even without any specific guidance from IMO with regards to extension of survey/inspection/audits and Certification, the Directorate vide DGS Order 6 of 2020, allowed extension of surveys/audits/inspections by RO for a period of 3-months after obtaining undertaking from the Master of the vessel for the satisfactory condition of the vessel and verification of past survey records, as deemed appropriate.
3. However, taking into cognizance IMO Circular Letter No. 4204/Add. 5 dated 17 March 2020, and also considering that many seafarer due for sign off are unable to do so due to the current situation created by COVID-19 and that their COC/COP/COE may be expiring and that they should not be forced to unnecessarily sail on vessels on the pretext of non-availability of seafarers or sign-off opportunity, the Directorate allowed extension of the validity of COC/COP/COE issued to all those seafarers for a limited period of one month. This extension was applicable to all those who were sailing onboard Indian

flagged vessels and also Indian seafarers who were sailing on foreign Flag ships at the time of issue of the Order by a period of one month only and without any preconditions or submissions of request for the same.

4. Now after taking stock and assessing of the emerging COVID-19 situation, the Directorate hereby extends the expiry date of all STCW Certificates (*includes the training certificates i.e., certificates required under Chapter VI of the STCW*) and associated endorsements issued by the Directorate General of Shipping (DGS) which are expiring between **23rd March and 1st October 2020** (both dates inclusive), for a period of 6 (six) months from the expiry date printed/typed on the relevant certificate (COC/COP/COE). However, all those seafarers who meet the eligibility requirements for revalidation may make an application after the lifting of the lockdown period, to the Mercantile Marine Department for revalidation of their certificate of COC/COP/COE. Further, whenever the revalidation of the expired certificate is to be carried out, the new validity shall be issued for a period of five years from the original certificate expiry date.
5. There is no need to approach the DGS for any confirmation email of extension but may retain a copy of this order onboard for the guidance of officials should it be required.
6. The above extension is in the view of the prevailing extraordinary circumstances of the worldwide spread of COVID-19 and the country wide lockdown. The other part of DGS Order 6 of 2020 stand as it is.


3/4/2020

(Amitabh Kumar)

Director General of Shipping and
Additional Secretary to the Govt. of India



भारत सरकार / GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
पोत परिवहन मंत्रालय / MINISTRY OF SHIPPING

नौवहन महानिदेशालय, मुंबई
DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF SHIPPING, MUMBAI

DG Shipping Order No. 06 of 2020.

NO: ENG/Misc-29(73)/09	Dated: 23.03.2020
Subject: Regarding Extension to the validity of seafarers' CoC and Statutory Certificates, periodical Surveys and Audits of Indian Registered Ships in view of COVID 19 outbreak.	

1. Introduction:

- 1.1 The outbreak of COVID-19 virus and its fast spreading has resulted in authorities taking precautionary measures by way of lockdown/shutdown of facilities. As a result of these precautionary measures, the owners and managers of the Indian Registered Ships and Indian seafarers are experiencing difficulties / challenges in adhering to the various statutory requirements / obligations imposed under the Merchant Shipping Act and its rules / regulations, such as maintenance of seafarers documents onboard ships and their validity including the validity of ship's statutory certificates.
- 1.2 This Administration is seized of the fact that some of the difficulties to meet statutory requirements such as expiry of the validity of Certificate of Competency (COC)/Certificate of Equivalency(COE) of seafarers, inability to obtain shipyard dry-docking services, inability to carry out mandatory periodical surveys, audits and inspections, etc that are currently being faced are solely not due to the fault of the ship owner / manager but due to the current situation being faced due to COVID-19.
- 1.3 In view of the above, the Directorate empathises with the current situation that is being faced by the owners and managers of Indian Registered Ships and takes following wider measures due to COVID-19, applicable to all Indian ships, for a

period of **One** month from the date of issue of this order, in addition to acting upon their ship specific cases favourably and expeditiously.

2. Actions for the force majeure arising due to COVID-19

2.1 Extension of service beyond the COC/COE/COP revalidation deadline:

The COC / COE / COP of seafarers, who are currently sailing onboard Indian flagged vessels and Indian seafarers sailing on foreign Flag ships, whose COC / COE / COP are about to expire stands extended for a maximum period of **One** month or till they sign off, whichever is earlier.

2.2 Safe Manning Document (SMD) and exemptions to SMD:

Where the Ship owners/Operators/Managers need to sign-off a crew member from a vessel due to the port restrictions at some ports and travel restrictions and the Ship owners/Operator/Manager is unable to repatriate them, exemptions to Safe Manning Documents will be considered on a case by case basis. Each request should be supported by risk assessment from the company. There will be no fees charged for these exemptions and exemptions will be issued on email.

2.3 Extension of mandatory surveys, audits and expiry of statutory certificates.

Consideration for the issuance of extension of mandatory statutory surveys, inspections and DOC/SMC/MLC/ISPS audits for a maximum period of 3 months under 'force majeure' due to the COVID 19 situation, will be granted provided necessary justification submitted for approval.

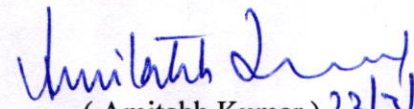
For extension of requests for DOC/SMC/MLC/ISPS and inspections, the application need to be submitted much before the due date of the inspection / audits or expiry date of concerned statutory certificates in order to avoid issues arising out of PSC. There will be no fees charged for these extensions/exemptions and extensions/exemptions will be issued on email.

2.4 In so far as extension of dry-docking surveys / periodical / annual / renewal surveys are concerned, if practicable, the Class may carryout necessary inspections for the purpose of the proposed extension of surveys. If the Class is finding it impractical to carry out certain inspections due to the prevailing conditions in various ports / countries, they may issue the requested survey extension with proper justification after obtaining an

undertaking from the Master of the vessel for the satisfactory condition of the vessel and verification of survey records, as deemed appropriate. For extension of surveys, the online payment of applicable fees, as being done currently, shall continue.

3. In order to avoid misuse of the aforesaid relaxations, the ship owner / managers will have to keep the records to be verified during the next scheduled audit of the ship / company and penal action may be initiated, if found unjustified.

4. The validity of this order will be reviewed as the situation on spread / check of COVID-19 unfolds.


(Amitabh Kumar) 23/3/2020

Director General of Shipping and
Additional Secretary to the Govt. Of India