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Circular Letter No.4299/Add.4
7 April 2021

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

Subject: **Communication from the Government of the Republic of Kiribati**

The Government of the Republic of Kiribati has sent the attached communication, dated 1 April 2021, with the request that it be circulated by the Organization.



**MINISTRY OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION, TRANSPORT AND
TOURISM DEVELOPMENT**

P.O. Box 487, Betio, Tarawa, Republic of KIRIBATI
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File Ref: 04/01

Date: 01st April 2021

H.E Mr. KITACK LIM

Secretary General
International Maritime Organization
4th Albert Embankment
London
SE1 7SR
United Kingdom

Dear **Secretary General**,

Subject: Extension of Kiribati Border Closure until end June 2021 due to COVID19 & Validity of Kiribati Issued STCW '78 (as amended), STCW – 95 and Medical Fitness Certificates extended to 31st Dec 2021

In reference to the continuing pandemic that still affects Seafarers and as a result Kiribati still close its borders, the Ministry of Information, Communication, Transport & Tourism Development (the "Administrator") is informing the Organization in response to continuous restrictions to national and international travels, adopted worldwide that have created difficulties to the shipping operations.

The Government of Kiribati had extended its border closure until end of June 2021 and the Administrator wishes to inform the Organisation of the further extension of the validity of Kiribati Issued STCW '78 (as amended), STCW – 95 and Medical Fitness Certificates STCW Seafarers Certificates to **31st December 2021**.

Please find attached:

- The Government of Kiribati Border Closure Press Release - **PR No.06: OB15012020** and
- Marine Notice 02/2021

I would be most grateful if the Secretariat could circulate this information to all IMO Member States and relevant stakeholders.

Please accept, Mr Secretary General, the assurance of my highest consideration.

Yours faithfully.

Mr Tarataake Teannaki
Secretary

Ministry of Information, Communication, Transport & Tourism Development Republic of Kiribati



Press Release

For immediate Release

Kiribati extends its border closure until the end of June 2021

Bairiki, Tarawa, 13th March 2021-----The Government of Kiribati has officially declared a further extension of its border closure in response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. This new extension will remain effective until the end of June 2021 when another review is expected to take place for further determination of Kiribati's border settings. During this extension period, special approvals can be obtained for humanitarian flights to transport essential equipment, medical supplies and for the conduct of medevac operations.

Government's Repatriation Taskforce that oversees the repatriation of Kiribati nationals abroad will continue to plan and facilitate repatriation exercises to bring back all I-Kiribati stranded. The Taskforce is also coordinating with relevant Ministries to mobilize Kiribati students to commence their studies at tertiary level in Fiji alongside key workers and other members of the travelling public.

Standard Operational Procedures that seek to safeguard the public from the potential entry and transmission of COVID-19 will remain in force for all incoming travelers including a mandatory quarantine of 14 days at the Government-designated facility on South Tarawa. This has proven helpful to the Government's effort to maintain Kiribati's COVID-19 free status.

The provision of medical supplies and cargoes will also continue under the established COVID-19 safety procedures and protocols to ensure necessary support is provided to strengthen the national health system and to address people's needs.

The Government acknowledges the dedicated service of all frontline workers and all who are involved in the success of repatriations to date and continues to appeal to the general public and Kiribati's development partners for their continued cooperation, support and understanding to ensure the necessary arrangements are strictly followed so that risks are managed and the health safety of all is not compromised.

For more info, contact:

Communications & PR Unit, Office of The President, P.O Box 68, Bairiki, Tarawa, Republic of Kiribati
Tel: +686-21183, Fax: +686-21466, Mobile: +686-73003095 or 75021183; E-mail: tteabo@ob.gov.ki or cm.mataiti@ob.gov.ki



MARINE DEPARTMENT

MARINE NOTICE 02/2021

Purpose

The purpose of this Marine Notice is to update all parties concerned on the new issued Press Release (PR No.06: OB15012020 - attached) issued by the Office of Te Beretitenti, whereby Kiribati Extends its Border Closure Amidst the Covid19 Pandemic and to further inform all concerned parties including, but not limited to, Port Authorities and Inspectors, Ship Masters, Ship Managers, Ship Owners, Ship Operators, Seafarers, Fishers, Recruiting Agents, Maritime Training Institutes, Approved Medical Doctors and Seamen's to take note of the full contents of this Marine Notice in regard to the extension of the Kiribati issued STCW, STCW-F and Medical Fitness certificates now expired during this time of COVID-19 crisis.

Concerns

The Government of Kiribati has officially declared re-extension of Border Closure, until end of June 2021 due to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, and with the uncertainty of further extension(s) on Border Closure, the Kiribati seafarers and fishers working abroad on international voyage will continue to be affected, in meeting the mandatory provisions of the international conventions, the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW), 1978 (as amended), and the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Fishing Vessel Personnel (STCW-F) 1995

Implementation

As a result, the Marine Department has implemented re-arrangements that:

- All Kiribati issued STCW and STCW-F certificates, and associated endorsements, expired from 01 April 2021 are given a further extension of validity until **31 December 2021**.
- All Kiribati Marine Medical fitness issued certificates of medical fitness, expired from 01 April 2021 are given a further extension of validity until **31 December 2021**.
- Owners, operators and masters of ships to permit personnel subject above, to continue performing duties.

Revalidation

The above measures apply to all Kiribati issued STCW certificates. However, those seafarers who meet the eligibility requirements for revalidation, and have the ability to make an application before the expiry date of the certificate, are strongly encouraged to apply to revalidate their certificate before it expires.

Please note the norm of validity date of issue of the STCW and STCW-F certificates is 5 years, and a Medical Fitness certificate depends but not more than 2 years, after which periods a new replacement is required.

Further information

Should you require any further assistance or information, please contact the Kiribati Marine Department on +686 74026003 during working hours (0800hrs to 1615hrs Local time (UTC+12hrs)) or email to marine.officer@micttd.gov.ki