

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

Circular Letter No.4271
16 April 2020

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

Subject: **Communication from the Federal Republic of Nigeria**

The Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria has sent the attached communication, dated 15 April 2020, with the request that it is circulated by the Organization.



NIGERIAN MARITIME ADMINISTRATION AND SAFETY AGENCY (NIMASA)

(Established under the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency Act, 2007)

Maritime House: 4 Burma Road, Apapa, P.M.B. 12861, Lagos.

E-mail: info@nimasa.gov.ng Website: www.nimasa.gov.ng

MN 04/20/SN01

MARINE NOTICE

TO ALL: SHIPOWNERS, SHIPPING AGENTS, OPERATORS, MASTERS, SEAFARERS, FLAG STATES, PORT STATES, RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATIONS AND THE PUBLIC.

1. Extension of validity of Statutory and Trading certificates for all Nigerian Registered vessels including The Standards of Training Certification and Watch-keeping (STCW) certificates issued by the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency and Crew change during COVID-19.

2. The Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency remain committed to implementing its mandates during the CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) crisis and has determined the COVID-19 outbreak to be a pandemic calling for immediate measures to keep the global shipping chain moving.

3. Following the International Maritime Organisation's (IMO) circular letter No. 4202/Add.5/Rev.1 dated 2nd April 2020, on guidance relating to the certification of Seafarers and fishing vessel personnel, the Agency hereby extends the validity of certificates (*details stated in paragraph 7 of this notice*) issued under the instruments mentioned below:

- Standard of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) Convention 1978, as amended:
- Mandatory and Safety certificates
- Certificates of medical fitness
- Statutory and Trading Certificates related to:
- SOLAS '74 as Amended
- MARPOL 73/78 as Amended
- Certificates of Ship Registry
- National requirements for Power Driven Small Crafts (PDSC)
- MLC,2006 as amended.

4. The International Maritime Organization (IMO) in its recent Circular Letter No.4204-Add.5, encouraged the Flag States to take a pragmatic and practical approach concerning the extension of certificates and endorsements, as strictly necessary on revalidation of training certificates of seafarers, including medical certificates; and issuance of endorsements attesting recognition of certificates following the STCW Convention 1978, as amended.

5. Port State control authorities are encouraged to take a pragmatic and practical approach concerning these certificates and endorsement extensions, and their acceptance in the exercise of control procedures following article X (Control) and regulation I/4 (Control procedures) of the STCW Convention 1978, as amended.

6. Also, the IMO Circular dated 30th March 2020 further called on governments around the world too, *inter alia*, (i) designate professional seafarers and marine personnel regardless of nationality as key workers providing essential service; and (ii) grant professional seafarers and marine personnel with any necessary and appropriate exemption from national travel or movement restriction in order facilitate their joining or leaving.

7. To this end and without prejudice to the Agency's guidelines on COVID-19, ALSO TAKE NOTICE of the following temporary contingency measures by the Agency:

1. Extension of the validity/revalidation of related Certificates with expiration dates starting from 1st March 2020 to 1st July 2020 for three (3) months or until the full resumption of working operations in the Agency, whichever is earlier subject to an undertaking from

the Master of such vessel attesting to the satisfactory condition of the vessel.

2. Extension of the validity of the STCW certificates, certificates of safety training and certificates of medical fitness issued by the Agency if they would otherwise expire between 1st March 2020 and 1st July 2020 (both dates inclusive), for 3 (three) months from the expiry date printed/typed on the relevant certificate

Standards of Training Certification and Watch-keeping (STCW) certificates including Certificates of Competency and Certificates of Proficiency, GMDSS radio operator certificate, a certificate of safety or a certificate of proficiency as a cook.

3. The extension will apply to all Nigerian flagged vessels and seafarers sailing on-board Nigerian flagged vessels and seafarers with Nigerian Certificate of Competency who are sailing on foreign Flagships.

4. The period of extension granted above is subject to review and same may, where necessary, be extended by issuing notice in this regard.

5. Whenever the revalidation of the expired certificate is to be carried out, the new validity shall conform with the usual cycle and shall be dated from the original certificate expiry date.

6. Crew change/travels from and to vessels in Nigeria is subject to obtaining clearance from the Port Health and the Nigerian Centre for Disease Control concerning status on COVID – 19.

8. FURTHER TAKE NOTICE

- That the foregoing extensions would enable Owners and Masters of Ships to permit personnel to continue performing duties in the view of the prevailing extraordinary circumstance of the COVID-19 Pandemic and the nation-wide lockdown in Nigeria.
- Owners and masters are to report any deficiency that may affect the approved capacity and performance standards of all Fire Fighting Appliances (FFA), Life Saving Appliances (LSA) onboard vessels.
- Owners and masters are to report the Malfunctioning of any anti-Pollution Equipment that would normally affect the validity of related certificates
- The vessel owner must have a valid insurance policy at all times.
- Fresh application for flag registration or Provisional Certificate of Registry and related Condition surveys are not covered by this extension.

NOTE: All regulatory and enforcement bodies, Owners and Masters of ships are advised to note the foregoing and ensure smooth operations of the vessels.

9. FURTHER INFORMATION

Many of our officials would be working remotely during this time. All request for services, any further information or assistance, should be made through:

Capt. Sunday M Umoren
Head, Maritime Safety and Seafarers Standards
Tel: +2347034172913.

Email: sunday.umoren@nimasa.gov.ng; s.umoren@yahoo.com

SIGNED: **MANAGEMENT**