INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION

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Circular Letter No.4233/Add.1
14 July 2020

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

Subject: **Communication from Ireland**

The Government of Ireland has sent the attached communication, dated 10 July 2020, with the request that it be circulated by the Organization.

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SUSTAINABLE SHIPPING FOR A SUSTAINABLE PLANET

An Roinn Iompair, Turasóireachta agus Spóirt
Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport

Marine Notice No. 14 of 2020

Reissued 10/07/20 & Expiring 28/02/2021

Notice to all Shipowners, Fishing Vessel Owners, Agents, Shipmasters, Skippers, Fishers, Yachtsmen and Seafarers

Temporary Contingency Planning for Certification of Seafarers – COVID-19

This Marine Notice sets out the temporary measures being put in place in relation to the validity of seafarers' documents impacted as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Further information on processes and procedures to be followed in relation to COVID-19 and Maritime Declarations of Health are detailed in Marine Notice 06 of 2020.

In light of the position of the European Union and of the International Maritime Organisation, the Irish Maritime Administration (IMA) of the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (DTTAS) is adopting the following measures and procedures to provide for a temporary extension to the validity of seafarer certificates in order to minimise the impact of COVID-19 on the maritime sector as much as possible.

Certificates and Seafarers' Employment Agreements

1. **Certificates of Competency & Certificates of Proficiency:**

   Any Irish Certificate of Competency (CoC), or Certificate of Proficiency for service on tankers, issued to a seafarer by the IMA, in line with the International Convention on Standards, Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) and/or national regulations, which expires or is due to expire between 1 March 2020 and 31 August 2020 are hereby given an extension until 30th September 2020 or until 6 months from the certificate's date of expiry, whichever occurs later. The IMA is in the process of issuing a temporary extension certificate to all affected seafarers, details will be provided on www.seafarers.ie, in due course. Seafarers are required to retain their expired certificate along with a copy of this Marine Notice for inspection and presented when requested to do so.

2. **Certificates of Equivalent Competency**

   Any Irish Certificate of Equivalent Competency (CeC) issued to a seafarer by the IMA, in line with the International Convention on Standards, Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) and/or national regulations, will be linked to the validity of the seafarer's national Certificate of Competency. Should the seafarer's national Certificate of Competency be renewed an application for an Irish Certificate of Equivalent Competency can be made through email. The seafarer will automatically be granted with a Confirmation of Receipt of Application (CRA), this will allow the seafarer to sail on Irish registered vessels for the periods specified below:

   - CRA's issued prior to 10/07/2020 for an extended period of 6 months.
   - CRA's issued on or after 10/07/2020 normal 3 month period of validity will apply.

Should a seafarer be unable to apply for a CoC within their home country, they must request a written declaration from the relevant administration in their home country stating that their CoC has been extended for a period of months which should then be submitted to the IMA for review. The IMA will then be in a position to issue another CRA to allow the seafarer to continue to work on board. There is no requirement for a seafarer to make an application for such an extension, however, their expired CeC must be retained along with a copy of this Marine Notice for inspection and presented when requested to do so.

3. Seaman's Discharge Book

Seafarers that are unable to renew a completed (full) discharge book should request that all seafarer discharges or engagements are recorded on paper (paper discharge).

4. Medical Certificates:

A medical certificate issued to a seafarer under the seafarers' medical examination scheme, which expires or is due to expire between 1 March 2020 and 31 August 2020 are hereby given an extension until 30th September 2020 or until 3 months from the certificate's date of expiry, whichever occurs later, where the seafarer is unable to present to an Approved Doctor for a medical examination in order to renew their certificate. There is no requirement for a seafarer to make an application for such an extension, however, their expired certificate must be retained along with a copy of this Marine Notice for inspection and presented when requested to do so. Any restrictions associated with a seafarers' medical certificate remain in place during the extension period.

5. Seafarer Employment Agreements (SEA):

Where a seafarer's employment agreement expires or is due to expire between 1 March 2020 and 31 August 2020, and a seafarer has reached the maximum period of service and/or repatriation of the seafarer is difficult due to current travel restrictions, the SEA may be extended until 30th September 2020 or until 6 months from the date of expiry, whichever occurs later with the agreement of the seafarer. In this situation, the same terms and conditions as originally agreed will continue to apply. Any Agreement to such an extension, must be signed by the seafarer and witnessed by a person not party to the Agreement.

6. Shipowner liability

Shipping companies remain liable for costs pending repatriation such as medical care, crew transfer, isolation etc. If in doubt, please contact the financial security provider to confirm that the insurance or other financial security is in place for additional costs.

7. Seagoing service

All days spent on the ship when it is fully crewed and operational or if placed in "warm lay-up", will be accepted as valid seagoing service for the revalidation or issue of a CoC. Sea service for cadets currently completing a sea phase will be subject to review.

8. Minimum Safe Manning Document (MSMD)

If a crew member needs to leave the ship due to urgent circumstances and cannot be replaced immediately due to COVID-19 travel restrictions the shipowner/Company manager should contact the Marine Survey Office for a dispensation or revised MSMD as may be applicable.

Seafarer Training and Certification – Certificates of Proficiency

9. Refresher/updating training requirements

If you are serving onboard ship and are qualified in any of the following, you must have documentary evidence of either having completed the training course or updated your training within the last 5 years;

(a) Proficiency in Personal Survival Techniques (PST) STCW A-VI/1-1,
(b) Proficiency in Survival Craft and Rescue Boats other than Fast Rescue Boats (PSC & RB), STCW A-VI/2-1
(c) Proficiency in Fast Rescue Boats (PFRB) STCW A-VI/2-2;
(d) Proficiency in Fire Prevention and Fire Fighting (FP & FF), STCW A-VI/1-2
(e) Proficiency in Advanced Fire Fighting (AFF) STCW A-VI/3

All of the basic and advanced courses listed in (a) to (e) above, must be updated every 5 years.

9.1 Temporary provisions

DTTAS is aware that a significant number of ancillary training course providers ceased training during the Covid-19 pandemic and whilst such providers may be resuming their activities during July 2020, seafarers who require refresher training may not be able to find an available course.

- **Seafarers**

For the holder of an Irish Certificate of Proficiency, DTTAS considers that, for those seafarers who are on board a vessel or about to return and their safety training which expires or is due to expire between 1 March 2020 and 31 August 2020, a self-declaration may be completed to allow the seafarer to comply with STCW updating/refresher training. This self-declaration shall be acceptable for no more than 6 months following the fifth anniversary of the issue date of the certificate concerned or until 30th September 2020, whichever occurs later.

- **Training Course Providers**

Training Course Providers whose DTTAS approval expires during the period 1 March 2020 until 31 August 2020 will receive an extension of their approval until 30th September 2020 on application to the Marine Survey Office

9.2 Procedure

The seafarer must complete the appropriate self-declaration appended to this Marine Notice detailed in Annexes A - E and retain the original copy together with their original training certificate on board. This declaration shall be made available for inspection on request.

Documentary evidence must be retained by the ship to show that related safety training has been completed by all persons required to do so. It is the responsibility of the company and Master to maintain such records.

A copy of this Marine Notice shall be retained on board a vessel to explain the temporary provisions to PSC, Surveyors etc.

9.3 Approved updating/refresher training

An approved updating/refresher training course must be completed as soon as possible when courses become available.

9.4 Proficiency in Medical First Aid

Updating of the Proficiency in Medical First Aid is not currently required under the STCW Code and therefore no refresher training is required.

9.5 Company Responsibility

In conforming to the provisions of STCW Convention Regulation 1/14, and section A-1/14, of the STCW Code, companies must ensure that seafarers assigned to any of their ship have received refresher and updating training as required by the Convention.

10. Port State Control Inspections

The IMA will accept expired seafarer certificates of competency/proficiency and medical certificates where the flag administration has granted an extension due to the current circumstances. In these circumstances, the shipowner may be asked to produce any letter of dispensation issued by the flag State and details of any measures put in place in order to comply with any conditions imposed by the flag State, including where appropriate, amendments to relevant parts of the Declaration of Maritime Labour Compliance – Part 1 & II. Shipowners may also be required to provide details of how crew entitlements under Maritime Labour Convention are to be protected in light of an extended stay on board and what plans, if necessary, the shipowner has to repatriate them.

11. Expiry

As soon as new Certificates of Competency and Certificates of proficiency can be issued their period of validity of five years will start from the expiry date of the previous certificates This Marine Notice shall expire on 28th February 2021 and the provisions outlined above will no longer be applicable.

Note: Marine Notices are issued purely for maritime safety and navigation reasons and should not be construed as conferring rights or granting permissions.

Irish Maritime Administration,
Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport,
Leeson Lane, Dublin 2, D02 TR60, Ireland.

10/07/2020

Encl: Annexes A - E

For any technical assistance in relation to this Marine Notice, please contact:
The Marine Survey Office, tel: +353-(0)1-678 3400.
For general enquiries, please contact the Maritime Safety Policy Division, tel: +353-(0)1-678 3418.
Written enquiries concerning Marine Notices should be addressed to:
Dept. of Transport, Tourism and Sport, Maritime Safety Policy Division, Leeson Lane, Dublin 2, D02 TR60, Ireland.
email: MarineNotices@dttas.gov.ie or visit us at: www.dttas.gov.ie

Annex A

Personal Survival Techniques Updating Training Self Declaration Form (Signed by seafarer and witnessed by the Master or Company Representative)

I .....declare that in the last 5 years I have completed onboard training and gained experience for maintaining the required standard of competence in the following:

	Tick if completed
1. Don a life jacket	
2. Board a survival craft from the ship, while wearing a life jacket	
3. Take initial actions on boarding a lifeboat to enhance chance of survival	
4. Stream a life raft drogue or sea-anchor	
5. Operate survival craft equipment	
6. Operate location devices, including radio equipment	
7. I have participated in onboard abandon ship drills	
8. I have held a position on the ships Muster List in an active capacity (not as supernumary)	

I have completed the above onboard the following vessels:

Vessel	IMO Number	Dates onboard

Signed……

Print Name:……

Date:……

Ships Master/Company representative:……

Stamp

Annex B

Fire Prevention and Fire Fighting Updating Training Self Declaration Form (Signed by seafarer and witnessed by the Master or Company Representative)

I .....declare that in the last 5 years I have completed onboard training

and gained experience for maintaining the required standard of competence in the following:

	Tick if completed
1. Use self-contained breathing apparatus	
2. Effect a rescue in a smoke-filled space, using an approved smoke-generating device aboard, while wearing a breathing apparatus.	
3. I have participated in onboard fire drills	
4. I have held a position on the ships Muster List in an active capacity (not as supernumary)	

I have completed the above onboard the following vessels:

Vessel	IMO Number	Dates onboard

Signed……

Print Name:……

Date:……

Ships Master/Company representative:……

Stamp

Annex C

Proficiency in Survival Craft and Rescue Boats Other Than Fast Rescue Boats Updating Training Self Declaration Form (Signed by seafarer and witnessed by the Master or Company Representative)

I …….. declare that in the last 5 years I have completed onboard training and gained experience for maintaining the required standard of competence in the following:

	Tick if completed
1. Take charge of a survival craft or rescue boat during and after launch:	
Interpret the markings on survival craft as to the number of persons they are intended to carry Give correct commands for launching and boarding survival craft, clearing the ship and handling and disembarking persons from survival craft Prepare and safely launch survival craft and clear the ship's side quickly Safely recover survival craft and rescue boats	
2. Manage survivors and survival craft after abandoning ship:	
Steer a boat and steer by compass Use individual items of equipment of survival crafts, except for pyrotechnics rig devices to aid location	
3. Use locating devices, including communication and signalling apparatus	
• Use of portable radio equipment for survival craft	
4. Apply first aid to survivors	
• Use of the first aid kit and resuscitation techniques • Manage injured persons, including control of bleeding and shock	
5. I have participated in onboard survival craft and rescue boat drills	
6. I have held a position on the ships Muster List in an active capacity (not as supernumary)	

I have completed the above onboard the following vessels:

Vessel	IMO Number	Dates onboard

Signed……

Print Name:……

Date:……

Ships Master/Company representative:……

Stamp

Annex D

Fast Rescue Boats Updating Training Self Declaration Form
(Signed by seafarer and witnessed by the Master or Company Representative)

I .....declare that in the last 5 years I have completed onboard training and gained experience for maintaining the required standard of competence in the following:

	Tick if completed
1. Take charge of a fast rescue boat during launch:	
• control safe launching and recovery of a fast rescue boat	
2. Take charge of a fast rescue boat after launch:	
• handle a fast rescue boat in prevailing weather and sea conditions • use communications and signalling equipment between the fast rescue boat and a ship and or a helicopter • use the emergency equipment carried • carry out search patterns, taking account of environmental factors	
3. I have participated in onboard fast rescue boat drills	
4. I have held a position on the ships Muster List in an active capacity (not as supernumary)	

I have completed the above onboard the following vessels:

Vessel	IMO Number	Dates onboard

Signed……

Print Name:……

Date:……

Ships Master/Company representative:……

Stamp

Annex E

Advanced Fire Fighting Updating Training Self Declaration Form (Signed by seafarer and witnessed by the Master or Company Representative)

I ..... declare that in the last 5 years I have completed onboard training

and gained experience for maintaining the required standard of competence in the following:

	Tick if completed
1. Control fire fighting operations onboard ships:	
• Fire-fighting procedures at sea and in port, with particular emphasis on organization, tactics and command • Communication and coordination during fire-fighting operations • Ventilation control, including smoke extraction • Control of fuel and electrical systems • Fire-fighting process hazards (dry distillation, chemical reactions, boiler uptake, fires) • Fire precautions and hazards associated with the storage and handling of materials • Management and control of injured persons • Procedures for coordination with shore-based fire fighters	
2. I have participated in onboard fire fighting drills	
3. I have held a position on the ships Muster List in an active capacity (not as supernumary)	

I have completed the above onboard the following vessels:

Vessel	IMO Number	Dates onboard

Signed……

Print Name:……

Date:……

Ships Master/Company representative:……

Stamp