CCS Technical Information

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To: Shipowners, ship managers and operators, Ship agents and masters, Shipyards, Flag State Administrations, Port State Administrations.

NOTICE FOR ISSUING ELECTRONIC CERTIFICATES TO SHIPS

For the purpose of reducing the administrative burden on stakeholders caused by the reliance on traditional paper certificates, and promoting the efficiencies of ship-ship/ship-shore information exchange and related formalities, please be kindly notified that China Classification Society (hereinafter referred as "CCS") will provide electronic certificate service to ships since March 31, 2018, with the following details:

1. Introduction

The Facilitation Committee (FAL) of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) at its 40th session approved the Guidelines for the use of electronic certificates (FAL.5/Circ.39/Rev.2) that provides guidance to facilitate the use and acceptance of electronic certificates.

The electronic certificate issued by CCS is equally authentic as the hard copy, which is in compliance with the requirements of FAL.5/Circ.39/Rev.2 by the following features:

- .1 the electronic certificate has the same format and content as required by the relevant international convention or instrument and contains a printable and visible electronic seal of CCS;
- .2 a digital signature shown in signature panel and at the top of the document viewer, keeps the certificate securing from forgery or illegal tampering;
- .3 a URL, a Quick Response (QR) code and a unique tracking number (UTN, example S018-123456) with a hyperlink are entered in the lower part of each page of the certificate for verification of its validity;

.4 the certificate is electronically issued or endorsed, and could be downloaded or transmitted through internet.

2. Authorization of flag State

Flag State's authorization or acceptance is a pre-requisite for CCS to issue electronic statutory certificates. Up to March 31, 2018, CCS is authorized to issue electronic certificates on behalf of 14 flag State Administrations. The real-time updated list of authorized flag States and the relevant requirements is provided in CCS website http://www.ccs.org.cn/electrocert/doc/flag.html.

China-flagged ships engaged in international voyages shall use both paper and electronic statutory survey certificates in accordance with the requirements of China MSA. Unless otherwise stated, ships registered in other flag States shall use only the electronic certificates replacing the traditional paper certificates according to the requirements of the flag State and at the request of the company.

3. Issuance of electronic certificates

Ship managers or operators may request the CCS local branch office to issue the electronic certificates for all their ships, or request CCS to issue the electronic certificates during the next survey or audit of their ships. To ensure effective transmission, please provide accurate e-mail address for receipt of the electronic certificates.

Normally the electronic certificates are to be initially issued upon the completions of new construction survey, survey for transfer of class, major conversion survey, the latest periodical survey or audit and the additional survey for change of ship's name or flag, etc., CCS will continue to issue electronic certificates subsequently, unless the ship changes the flag to that not authorizes CCS to issue electronic certificates, or the shipowner/ company itself requests to cancel the service.

4. Use and Verification

CCS will actively push the use of electronic certificates on board, and will provide the high quality electronic certificate service to ships, companies and stakeholders. Relevant documents, such as Request for electronic certificate service on board, the Customer Guidance can be obtained from our website http://www.ccs.org.cn/electrocert.

For vessels being issued with electronic certificates, it is important to keep the latest valid certificates separately with the invalid ones to avoid any misuses, and for this purpose, the management companies are suggested to establish relevant procedures for the management of electronic certificates on board.

Please refer to Annex 1 for more details about the use and verification of electronic certificates. This Notice shall be kept on board together with the electronic certificates, and the Notices or Circulars issued by the relevant Flag State (such as China, Singapore) shall be also kept on board according to its requirement. These documents together with electronic certificates are to be made available to the interested port state control officers, surveyors, auditors, etc.

Annex 1 Use and verification instructions for electronic certificates

This Notice is made public on CCS website (www.ccs.org.cn), and is to be distributed to relevant shipowners, ship managers and operators, shipyards by CCS branches/regional centers within their responsible areas.

Annex 1

Use and verification instructions for electronic certificates

1. Digital signature

Ships using CCS electronic certificates are recommended to use a current version of Adobe Reader on the computer which can fully display the digital signature in signature panel and at the top of the document viewer. Adobe Reader can be downloaded free of charge from https://get.adobe.com/reader. Users may need to connect the computer to Internet, and go to "Edit" > "Preferences" > "Trust Manager" in Adobe Reader, select "Update Now" under the "Automatic Adobe Approved Trust List (AATL) updates" tab to update the AATL.

The digital signature will indicate whether the content of the certificate is not changed after certification by CCS.

2. Verification

An electronic certificate may be verified the validity by any of the following methods:

.1 access http://www.ccs.org.cn/electrocert, enter the UTN and ship's IMO No. or CCS Class No. or Company Identification No. to verify.

.2 scan the QR Code on the electronic certificate or printed version of electronic certificate to verify immediately.

.3 click the UTN hyperlink of the electronic certificate to verify immediately.

.4 in case of network restriction or other emergency circumstances, contact our office/branch, or direct to the CCS headquarter 24/7 electronic certificate service e-mail and hotline at:

Electronic class and statutory certificate:

Classed Ship in Service Department cdwork@ccs.org.cn

Electronic audit certificate:

Certification Management Department samis@ccs.org.cn

24h Hotline: +86-10-58113599

The verification result of an electronic certificate will show it is "VALID" or "INVALID". The "View E-Cert" button is available for access to the content of the electronic certificate.

3. Endorsement

CCS electronic certificate is to be endorsed electronically. In case of no access to the Internet on board, CCS surveyors/auditors may endorse on the printed version of electronic certificates after satisfied periodical survey/ audit. Certificates containing consistent electronically endorsement will be transmitted to the company or the ship within 72 hours after the completion date of the survey/ audit. Please keep the printed version endorsed by surveyors/ auditors on board before the receipt of the updated electronic certificates.

