
To: Relevant shipowners, ship management companies, shipyards and designers, product manufacturer, related departments of the Headquarters of CCS, the Society's surveyors, Plan Approval Centers

Technical Notice of guidance on the certification of seafarers related to COVID-2019 Issued by IMO and ITF

1. Background

With the outbreak worldwide of the new coronavirus pneumonia, IMO and International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) actively responded to the impact of the epidemic on the shipping industry, and issued guidance on the certification of seafarers related to COVID-2019.

2. Main content

(1) IMO encourages the issuing Administrations and Port State control authorities to extend the relevant certificates of seafarers.

(2) ITF has decided that during the period from 17 March 2020 to 16 April2020, it will not challenge extensions of contracts of up to one month, even when these push the seafarers service periods past the maximum allowable by relevant ITF approved CBA [or MLC], provided individual seafarers consent to such extensions.

IMO Circular Letter No.4204/Add.5 and ITF E-Circular No.087 are provided in the annexes. This technical notice is made public on CCS website (www.ccs.org.cn), and is to be distributed to relevant ship owners, product manufacturers and shipping

management companies etc. by CCS branches within their responsible areas. Please contact Technology & Information Department of CCS (ti@ccs.org.cn) for any inquiry in the implementation.

Annex 1: IMO Circular Letter No.4204/Add.5 - COVID-2019- Guidance relating to the certification of seafarers.

Annex 2: ITF E-Circular No.087 - COVID-2019.

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Circular Letter No.4204/Add.5

17 March 2020

To: All IMO Member States
United Nations and specialized agencies
Intergovernmental organizations
Non-governmental organizations in consultative status with IMO

Subject: **Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Guidance relating to the certification of seafarers**

1 The Secretary-General has been made aware of a number of concerns regarding seafarers' training and certification as a result of the coronavirus outbreak.

2 The actions taken worldwide as a result of the outbreak pose a serious challenge for Administrations to allow the continued training of seafarers, revalidate certificates, including medical certificates, and issuance of endorsements attesting recognition of certificates in accordance with the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for seafarers (STCW Convention), 1978, as amended.

3 In light of the foregoing, issuing Administrations are encouraged to take a pragmatic and practical approach with regard to the extension of the above-mentioned certificates and endorsements, as strictly necessary, and to notify ships, seafarers and relevant Administrations accordingly.

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

5 Members States are invited to communicate to the Organization general information on the practices adopted by the issuing Administrations and port State control authorities. The Organization will circulate this information.

6 Member States and other stakeholders are invited to bring the contents of this circular letter to the attention of all concerned, especially issuing Administrations and port State control authorities.



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International Transport Workers' Federation
Federación Internacional de los Trabajadores del Transporte
Fédération Internationale des ouvriers du transport
Internationella transportarbetarefederationen
Internationale Transportarbeiter-Föderation
Международная федерация транспортников
الاتحاد الدولي لعمال النقل

To all Maritime Affiliates and ITF FOC-POC Inspectorate

ITF E-Circular No. 087/D/F/IN/S/SS/2020

Our ref: D/F/IN/S/SS/JS/ld

17 March 2020

Dear Comrades,

RE: Covid-19

The spread of Covid-19 has been affecting the whole world and more and more countries are introducing travel restrictions in an effort to slow down the pandemic and to allow medical staff time to look after all affected and deal with this emergency.

The shipping industry plays a pivotal role in the global logistics chain and 90% of all goods are transported by sea so it is essential that this key function is allowed to continue to perform as close to its best as possible in this hour of dire need for communities worldwide.

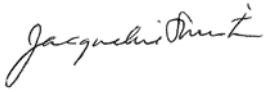
Some of the key labour providing countries for shipping like the Philippines and Ukraine are amongst those that have closed their borders and, as such, crew changes are becoming practically impossible to implement.

All sectors of the shipping industry are working together to keep the vital flow of raw materials and supplies on the go and, in discussion with its social partners, [including JNG,] ITF has also learned that most flags have been issuing exemptions from the maximum service periods prescribed within the Maritime Labour Convention (Regulation 2.5 Standard A2.5.1 para 2(b)).

In order to mitigate problems surrounding the replacement of crew, the ITF has decided that during the period from 17 March 2020 to 16 April 2020, it will not challenge extensions of contracts of up to one month, even when these push the seafarers service periods past the maximum allowable by relevant ITF approved CBA [or MLC], provided individual seafarers consent to such extensions.

It goes without saying that, should a seafarer have a solid case for being repatriated at the end of their contract despite the above mentioned travel restrictions, their case will be evaluated further by the social partners. The wishes of any individual seafarer should be taken into account when considering repatriation.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jacqueline Smith". The script is cursive and fluid.

Jacqueline Smith

Maritime Coordinator