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Circular Letter No.4230/Add.1
3 April 2020

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

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

The Permanent Mission of Panama sent the attached updated communication, with the request that it is circulated by the Organization.

**AUTORIDAD MARÍTIMA DE PANAMÁ
(PANAMÁ MARITIME AUTHORITY)
DIRECCIÓN GENERAL DE MARINA MERCANTE
(GENERAL DIRECTORATE OF MERCHANT MARINE)
DEPARTAMENTO DE CONTROL Y CUMPLIMIENTO
(DEPARTMENT OF CONTROL AND COMPLIANCE)**

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**Merchant Marine Notice
Coronavirus and Seafarers employment agreement and Certificates**

No.: MMN-03/2020

February, 2020.

1. The purpose of this Merchant Marine Notice is to inform that with the outbreak of the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), the World Health Organization (WHO) declared a state of global health emergency, causing massive uncertainty across the global trade, resulting in additional implication for the regular shipping operations. The coronavirus outbreak has spread rapidly extended further to several countries.
2. The effects of this outbreak are having a repercussion with the seafarers whose Certificate/s have expired or will expire soon, where the companies are facing problems because their planned disembarkation cannot be safely completed in ports affected by the outbreak of the Novel Coronavirus.
3. As it has been determined with extensive travel restrictions to and within infected and non-infected countries, moving personnel has become more difficult, resulting in harsh scrutinizing seafarers who have recently visited affected areas.
4. This Administration considers appropriate to inform how to proceed in the following scenarios of crew change:
 - 4.1. If the seafarers' employment agreement expires or will expire soon, an exception to Standard A2.4.3 "Entitlement to leave", and Standard A2.5.1.2(b) "Repatriation" of the Maritime Labour Convention 2006, will be granted in order to extend it.
 - 4.2. In those cases, where the change of crew, due to expiration of the Certificate/s, cannot be carried out due to the Corona Virus outbreak, this Administration shall consider appropriate the issuance of an Extension or Dispensation Letter evaluating the nature of the case.
5. This pandemic condition is causing inevitable delays on the renewal of the Certificate of Inspection of Crew Accommodation (CICA) expiring in March, April, May and June 2020, due to the travelling restrictions worldwide.
6. In this sense, this Administration has determined the following instructions for the issuance of the correspondent letter:
 - 6.1. **Extension of Seafarers Employment Agreement**

This letters to extend the Seafarers Employment Agreement shall be issued by the SEGUMAR Offices, and shall submit the following requirements:

- a) Email requesting the extension of the Certificate, including the particulars of the vessel, crew name and position on board,
- b) Copy of the Seafarer Employment Agreement (SEA) of each seafarer requesting the extension
- c) Crew List,
- d) Copy of the Registry certificate

Be informed that the given exception letter according to this Marine Notice will be for a period of three (3) months to continue being engaged f under their seafarers' employment agreements beyond a period of 11 months. The granted extension will be reviewed considering the condition of the COVID-19.

It is understood that at the end of the extension provided by this Administration, all seafarers will have the right to have their annual leave with pay, and to be duly repatriated, as prescribed by the Standard A2.4.3, and Standard A2.5.1.2(b) of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, as amended.

6.2. Extension of Seafarers Certificates including Certificates of Endorsement

This letter shall be issued for the certificates issued by the Panama Maritime Authority under the Regulation I/2 and I/10 of the STCW '78 Convention, as amended. These letters shall be issued by the SEGUMAR Offices, after receiving the following requirements:

- a) Email requesting the extension of the Certificate, including the particulars of the vessel, crew name and position on board,
- b) For extension of certificate under regulation I/2, Copy of the Certificate/s issued by the Panama Maritime Authority.
- c) For the Extension of Certificates issued under regulation I/10, shall submitted the Authorization letter of extension of the issuance Country and copy of the Home Country License.
- d) Crew List,
- e) Copy of the Registry Certificate

Be informed that the given extension according to this Marine Notice will be for a period of three (3) months from the date of expiration of the certificate/s, and reviewed whether the granted extension shall require additional period considering the condition of the (COVID-19).

6.3. Extension of the Validity of Color Copy of Original Transitory Certificate of Seafarers (CT)

The period of validity for the full-color copy of the Transitory Certificate stated on **MERCHANT MARINE CIRCULAR MMC-313** "period no longer than thirty (30) calendar days", is extended for ninety (90) calendar days, counting from the issuing date of the CT. This CT serves as evidence of the

application processing until the original document is received onboard. This extension will be reviewed considering the condition of the COVID-19.

6.4. Dispensation Letter

If any Third Party member of the STCW '78 Convention, who issued the Seafarers Certificate has not extended it due to Corona Virus outbreak, this Administration shall grant a Dispensation Letter to the capacity (rank) under the requirements stated in the Merchant Marine Circular No. 175 and the form established by the circular MMC-191 "[Crew Dispensation Form](#)" shall be submitted along with the following documents:

- a) Copy of the Certificate/s,
- b) Crew List
- c) Copy of the Registry Certificate

6.5. Dispensation Letter of the Certificate of Inspection of Crew Accommodation (CICA).

This Dispensation Letter to extend the Certificate of Inspection of Crew Accommodation (CICA) issued by the Maritime Labour Affairs Department of the General Directorate of Seafarers shall continue to be issued, please submit the following requirements to the e-mail address labormar@amp.gob.pa:

- a) Request Certificate of Inspection of Crew Accommodation (CICA) extension, including the particular of the vessel and reasons of the request.
- b) Copy of Full-Term Certificate of Inspection of Crew Accommodation (CICA) expired or about to expire.
- c) Registry Certificate.
- d) Annual Taxes Receipt.

The Dispensation Letters issued as product of the COVID-19 condition in this Marine Notice will be valid for a period of three (3) months, and at no cost, solely under this exceptional circumstances.

A copy of the Dispensation Letter issued by the Directorate General of Seafarers shall be attached to the Certificate of Inspection of Crew Accommodation (CICA).

7. Please contact the SEGUMAR Offices of your convenience to the following e-mail addresses:

America	
SEGUMAR Panama	msm@segumar.com
SEGUMAR Miami	segumar.miami@segumar.com
SEGUMAR Houston	offshore@segumar.com

Asia	
SEGUMAR Tokyo	segumar@panaconsul-tokyo.com
SEGUMAR Imabari	segumar.imabari@segumar.com rchacon@segumarimabari.jp
SEGUMAR Seoul	segumarseoul@segumar.com
SEGUMAR Busan	segumarbusan@segumar.com
SEGUMAR Singapore	segumar.sg@segumar.com
SEGUMAR Shanghai	segumar.shanghai@segumar.com
SEGUMAR Manila	segumar.manila@segumar.com
Europe	
SEGUMAR Piraeus	segumarp@segumar.com ;
SEGUMAR Istanbul	segumarist@segumar.com
SEGUMAR Dubai	segumar.dubai@segumar.com
SEGUMAR London	segumar.uk@segumar.com

8. If the Medical Certificates expires, it shall continue in force in this exceptional circumstance for a period of three (3) months from its expiry date (MLC, 2006 Standard A1.2.9).
9. Certificates of proficiency issued by an authorized Maritime Training Center of Panama in accordance with the regulation V and VI of the STCW amended (except those issued under regulation I/2) will be considered valid for a period of three (3) months from its expiry date.
10. Finally, this measure established would be revised accordingly to the condition of the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) across the global trade in the maritime sector.

March, 2020 – New paragraphs 5, 6, 6.3 and 6.5, the numbers of the paragraphs are also ordered.

March, 2020 - Coronavirus Prevention Measures

February, 2020 - Coronavirus Prevention Measure.

Inquiries concerning the subject of this Circular or any other request should be directed to:

Certification Department / SEGUMAR

General Directorate of Seafarers / General Directorate of Merchant Marine

Panama Maritime Authority

Phone: (507) 501-5062 / 5010

E-mail: verification@amp.gob.pa

msm@segumar.co