



BERMUDA MERCHANT SHIPPING GUIDANCE NOTICE

Impact of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (Covid-19) Outbreak on Bermuda-Registered Ships

This Notice is intended for: Ship Owners, Managers, Masters, Operators, Officers and Crew, Recruitment and Placement agencies.

Summary:

This Notice is intended to assist in the management of the impact of Covid-19 in Bermuda Registered ships

This Notice was issued on 17th March 2020

1. Overview

- (1) The Bermuda Shipping and Maritime Authority (BSMA) understands that in view of the ongoing COVID-19 situation, owners and managers of Bermuda registered ships are facing challenges in meeting various statutory requirements under the Maritime Labour Convention 2006, Merchant Shipping Act 2002 and the subsidiary legislation.
- (2) These challenges may include the timely repatriation of seafarers aboard Bermuda registered ships at the end of the period in the seafarer's employment agreement (SEA), seafarers who are not able to obtain revalidation from training institutes for their expiring certification, expiring medical certificates, inability to obtain shipyard dry-docking services, inability to carry out mandatory periodical surveys, audits and inspections in time, etc.
- (3) The BSMA will take a pragmatic approach to assist the industry in overcoming these challenges. The following paragraphs include a non-exhaustive list of scenarios and provide instructions for BSMA owners and managers who face such challenging issues due to the COVID-19 outbreak, to obtain favourable consideration and expedited approval.

2. Extension of Sea Service Beyond Contract Period

- (1) Owners and managers unable to repatriate seafarers who have completed the employment duration as stipulated in the seafarers' SEA in accordance with Bermuda Merchant Shipping (Repatriation) Regulations 2013 may submit a request to BSMA for extension of the sea service period. Documents to be submitted to BSMA as follows:
 - (a) Employment details of the affected seafarers

- (b) Confirmation of consent by the affected seafarers
- (2) The extension of the contractual period of the seafarers should be reflected on the corresponding SEA of the affected seafarers.

3. Extension of Mandatory Surveys, Audits and Expiry Of Statutory Certificates

- (1) Consideration will be given to the extension of mandatory statutory surveys, inspections or audits under force majeure or other unforeseen exceptional circumstances.
- (2) Application for extension of surveys/inspections/dry docking/audits or validity of statutory certificates may be submitted to BSMA.
 - (a) We advise Bermuda registered ship owners and managers to submit such applications before the due date of the surveys/audits or expiry date of the statutory certificate in order to avoid Port State Control issues.
 - (b) Any such application for extension of statutory surveys or audits will be pragmatically considered.
- (3) Where Internal Audits, required under the ISM Code Section 12.1, are approaching the due dates, these may be exceeded due to the current exceptional circumstances related to Covid-19. This will apply until further notice. An appropriate entry should be made in the ship's Official Log Book to document that the audit will be arranged at the next possible date.

4. Service Extension of Seafarers' Medical Certificates

- (1) Consideration will be given to the extension of expiring medical certificates as required by Merchant Shipping (Medical Certification of Seafarers) Regulations 2013 in circumstances where seafarers need to extend their sea service beyond the contract period.

5. Seafarer's Certification

- (1) Where Seafarer's Certificates of Competency (CoC) are due for renewal and difficulty is being experienced in gaining attendance at the necessary re-validation courses Seafarers are advised to contact the CoC issuing authority to request an extension of the validity of the certificate.
- (2) Where a Seafarer's CoC has been extended by the issuing authority, either individually or as a blanket statement, the BSMA agrees that the corresponding Bermuda Endorsement may be considered as extended by the same duration. No further application is required.

All application for dispensations as mentioned above may be submitted to survey@bermudashipping.bm and will be treated on an individual basis.

Chief Surveyor
Bermuda Shipping and Maritime Authority