



GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN
MINISTRY OF MARITIME AFFAIRS
DIRECTORATE GENERAL, PORTS & SHIPPING

No.7(4)/2018-CNS Karachi, 24 March 2020

SHIPPING NOTICE NO. 002/2020

**CORONAVIRUS (Covid-19)
Contingency Plan and Guidelines**

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Notice to all Ship Owners, Ship Operators and Managers, Masters and Officers of Merchant Ships, Agents, Charterers, Port Authorities, Terminal Operators.

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In the wake of spread of COVID-19 pandemic following instruction are issued for compliance / implementation & information of all concerned.

Joining and Repatriation of seafarers from vessels

The area affected by Coronavirus (COVID-19) and the strategy implementation by countries affected by it is constantly evolving. Many Governments have now introduced national and local restrictions including:

- Delayed port clearance;
- Prevention of crew or passengers from embarking or disembarking (preventing shore leave and crew changes);
- Prevention of discharging or loading cargo or stores, or taking on fuel, water, food and supplies; and
- Imposition of quarantine or refusal of port entry to ships (in extreme cases).

Countries have resorted to screening of passengers at airports and various ports have implemented pre-boarding screenings, including mandatory health check questionnaire accompanied with a thermal scan test. The Master should contact the local port authority to enquire if crew repatriation is available.

Safe Manning Document (SMD) and exemptions to SMD

The SMD will be issued in a digital format. Where it can be demonstrated that a crew member is required to depart a vessel due to the virus and the ship owner/operator is unable to replace them, exemptions to SMD will be considered on a case by case basis. Each request should be supported by risk assessment from the company.

Issue or Revalidation of a Pakistani Certificate of Competency where a seafarer is unable to disembark a vessel

Any seafarer who has completed the requirements for the issue of Pakistani CoC but is unable to submit their application to the Directorate General Ports & Shipping should send a scanned application form to the Directorate General Ports & Shipping Wing. Provided the supporting evidence meets the requirements, the seafarer will be issued with a Temporary Digital CoC valid for a period of 6 months and on-line data shall be updated. The applicable email addresses are as follow:

For Deck Officers: cns.dg@mercantilemarine.gov.pk

For Engineer Officers: cess@mercantilemarine.gov.pk

For Ratings: info@mercantilemarine.gov.pk

A similar approach will be taken for a seafarer whose CoC expires whilst they are on board. The required documentary evidence should be submitted to the Directorate General Ports & Shipping Wing through email where, after a digital temporary certificate will be issued valid for a period of 6 months.

Issue of Certificate of Recognition (CoR) where a seafarer is unable to disembark a vessel

CoR's can be issued in digital format in response to an application that is emailed to the Directorate General Ports & Shipping Wing. If a Master's temporary CoR expires whilst serving on board, then provided that the CoC is valid, another temporary CoR valid for a period of six months will be issued.

Seafarers with Pakistani Certificates of Competency (CoC) working on Pakistani flag vessels, who are unable to disembark a vessel

For a Pakistani CoC holder, the DG (P&S, Wing) can provide an exemption for officers who are on board a vessel and their safety training has expired. This will be based on a self declaration (as per the STCW 2010 Manila amendments requirements). A similar approach will be followed if a seafarer's CoC expires whilst on board. The CoC will be extended for a period of 6 months. Ship owners/operators should email to request such exemption or for CoC extension requests.

Seafarers with Pakistani CoC working on Non-Pakistani flag vessels

For a Pakistani CoC holder, the DG (P&S, Wing) will provide an exemption for those officers who are on board a Non-Pakistan flag vessel and their safety training has expired. This will be based on a self declaration (as per the STCW 2010 Manila amendments requirements). Ship owners/operators should email to request this exemption.

Issue or Revalidation of a Pakistani Certificate of Competency where a seafarer is unable to complete the updating/refresher training requirements but needs to join a vessel

Any seafarer who is unable to complete some or all of the updating refresher requirements for the issue or revalidation of a CoC, should send a scanned application to the DG (P&S, Wing). The seafarer will be issued with a Temporary CoC valid for a period of 6 months provided they can meet all the other requirements. They will also receive a letter from the DG (P&S, Wing) extending the validity of the training that they were unable to update/refresh. They should accompany their application with scanned copies of their original STCW Safety Training Certificate that will no longer be valid.

Where a Seafarer is unable to complete updating training requirements but needs to join a vessel

Any seafarer required onboard a vessel that is unable to complete some or all the updating/refreshing requirements but originally completed the DGP&S-approved training should send an email to DGP&S – this should be accompanied with:

- A company letter confirming the vessel they need to join and the date they are required;
- scanned copies of their original STCW Safety Training Certificate that will no longer be valid.

On receipt of above, the POMMD will issue the seafarer with a letter from the POMMD extending the validity of the training that needs updating/refreshing.

Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC)

Seafarers who are onboard vessel beyond their contracts for reasons connected with the Covid-19 virus.

The company should ensure that seafarers are kept informed of the risks of infection, reasons why they are required to stay on board, any measures being taken for their protection, and arrangements for their repatriation.

A valid Seafarers Employment Agreement (SEA) must remain in force until repatriation. If any of the SEAs have expired, they must be extended, or new ones issued. The company needs to ensure that the seafarers are sent home at the first available opportunity. Evidence should be retained by both the seafarer and the company clearly demonstrating the reason why the seafarer was asked to extend their contract.

Ship-Owners Liability

If in doubt, shipping companies should contact their financial security provider to confirm that insurance or other financial security is in place for additional costs pending repatriation (e.g. isolation), medical care, and any costs and expense of crew transfer for suspected cases.

Under MLC provisions relating to repatriation and medical care, ship-owners remain liable for costs pending repatriation (e.g. isolation), medical care, and any costs or expense of crew transfer for suspected cases.

Survey and Certification of Pakistani Flagged Vessels

Where surveys are due on vessels located overseas and it becomes difficult for attendance by a surveyor either MMD Surveyors or RO, the MMD will consider the extension of mandatory statutory survey windows by issuance of short-term certificates, on a case by case basis. Operators are advised to make requests to POMMD in good time before the expiry date to avoid Port State Control issues.