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7 February 2020

To : Shipowners / Ship Managers / Masters / Port Authorities concerned

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Extension of Crew Agreement Service Period for Seafarers
Working On Board Hong Kong Registered Ships in response to the
Outbreak of Novel Coronavirus**

Arising from the global outbreak of novel coronavirus, increasing number of port Authorities have adopted stringent border control to limit or bar the movement of persons with the objective of lowering the chance of the disease spreading in the community. We understand that such measures have resulted in shipowners having difficulty to arrange crew change for shipboard seafarers to be repatriated when their crew agreements expire. As a result, many seafarers employed to work on board Hong Kong registered ships may exceed the service period as entered in their crew agreements.

In view of the aforementioned circumstances, the Hong Kong Marine Department (HKMD) would like to draw the attention of shipowners / ship managers / masters that an extension of a seafarer's service period can be exercised pursuant to section 3A of the Merchant Shipping (Seafarers) (Repatriation) Regulation (Cap. 478Q), provided that such extension is agreed by the seafarer voluntarily in writing. Such extension should also be set out properly in the crew agreement, and should be submitted to

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HKMD within 28 days after signing in accordance with the requirement as stipulated in section 6 of the Merchant Shipping (Seafarers) (Crew Agreements, Lists of Crew and Discharge of Seafarers) Regulation (Cap. 478L).

Should there be any enquiry of this matter, please do not hesitate to contact HKMD at -

Email: mmo_mdd@mardep.gov.hk

Telephone: (852) 2852 3075

Fax: (852) 2545 4669

Yours faithfully,

(No signature on website copy)

(G.R. YE)

Mercantile Marine Office
for Director of Marine

cc: Hong Kong Shipowners Association
Hong Kong Seamen's Union
Merchant Navy Officers' Guild
Amalgamated Union of Seafarers, H.K.