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15 January 2024

To : Shipowners, Ship Managers and Masters of Hong Kong registered ships

Dear Sir/Madam,

Electronic Hong Kong Certificate of Competency and Certificate of Proficiency

The purpose of this circular letter is to inform shipowners, ship managers, masters, agents, seafarers' unions and seafarers about the new electronic Certificate of Competency (e-CoC) and electronic Certificate of Proficiency (e-CoP) to be issued by the Hong Kong Marine Department (MD).

2. Under regulation I/2 of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, as amended (STCW), and section 118K of the Merchant Shipping (Seafarers) Ordinance, MD is now issuing the e-CoC and e-CoP.

E-CoC and e-CoP

3. The e-CoC and e-CoP are PDF documents protected from edits, modifications or revisions. In addition to the required elements for certificate and endorsement under regulation I/2, Standard A-I/2 and Guidance B-I/2 of STCW, the e-CoC and e-CoP include a Unique Tracking Number (UTN) and a Quick Response (QR) Code for authenticity verification. When viewed in a PDF reader, a blue ribbon across the top of the PDF document (i.e. e-CoC and e-CoP) indicates that the document is authentic. The signature of the holder is not required in the e-CoC and e-CoP. The e-CoC and e-CoP must be saved in an electronic device, properly kept on board, and available for inspection at any time while the holder is serving on a ship. For operational convenience, printed version of an e-CoC and an e-CoP are accepted for preliminary inspection and filing purposes.

4. Those CoC in booklet format and CoP printed on security paper, which were issued prior to 31 December 2023, will remain valid until the date of expiry. Thus, during the transitional period of 5 years from the date of entry into force of the new e-CoC and new

e-CoP, there will be two valid types of CoCs and CoPs coexisting, i.e. e-CoC and e-CoP in PDF format, CoC in booklet format and CoP in security paper. Specimens of e-CoC, e-CoP, CoC in booklet format and CoP in security paper are enclosed in Annexes for reference and comparison.

Verification of authenticity and validity of certification

5. To maintain security and the integrity of the electronic certificates, all electronic certificates with the UTN and QR code could be verified through the “e-Certificate Verification System” on Marine Department website

(<https://www.mardep.gov.hk/verify>).

6. Meanwhile, the authenticity and validity of both paper CoC and paper CoP, and both e-CoC and e-CoP can also be verified through the existing “Seafarer's Certification and Licence Information System”

(<https://www.mardep.gov.hk/en/electronic-services/sclis/index.html>).

Enquiry

7. For more information on the implementation of the electronic certificates for Hong Kong registered ships, please refer to Hong Kong Merchant Shipping Information Notes No. 42/2023 “Electronic Certificates and Electronic Logbooks”

(<https://www.mardep.gov.hk/filemanager/en/share/msnote/pdf/msin2342.pdf>).

8. Any enquiries relating to this circular should be made to the Senior Surveyor of the Seagoing Examination and Mercantile Marine Office (telephone no.: (852) 2852 4383, fax no.: (852) 2541 6754, e-mail address: sssem@mardep.gov.hk, ebs_crt@mardep.gov.hk).

Yours faithfully,



(Z.J. Kuang)

Hong Kong Marine Department
for Director of Marine

Encl.: Annex I - Specimen of Electronic Certificate of Competency
Annex II - Specimen of Certificate of Competency printed in booklet format
Annex III - Specimen of Electronic Certificate of Proficiency
Annex IV - Specimen of Certificate of Proficiency printed on security paper

c.c.: Hong Kong Shipowners Association
Hong Kong Seamen's Union
Merchant Navy Officers' Guild
Amalgamated Union of Seafarers, HK