

MARINE DEPARTMENT NOTICE NO. 121/2024

(Statutory Requirements)

Implementation of Electronic Certificates and Electronic Documents for local vessels and their operators in Hong Kong

This Notice informs the local shipping industry that the Shipping Legislation (Electronic Certificates and Electronic Documents) (Amendment) Bill 2024 (the “**Bill**”) takes effect on **5 July 2024** (“**Effective Date**”) and covers the relevant operation of the following ordinances and their sub-legislation–

- (a) Shipping and Port Control Ordinance (Chapter 313)
- (b) Merchant Shipping (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Ordinance (Chapter 413)
- (c) Merchant Shipping (Local Vessels) Ordinance (Chapter 548)

2. Details of the Bill can be found through the following link:-
<https://www.gld.gov.hk/egazette/english/gazette/file.php?year=2024&vol=28&no=27&extra=0&type=1&number=16>
3. This Bill echoes one of the policy measures announced in the Chief Executive’s 2022 Policy Address that the Government will implement by phases the use of electronic certificates/licences/permits/documents (collectively referred to as “**e-certs**”) by Hong Kong-registered ships and local vessels with a view to enhancing marine services.
4. The Marine Department will implement e-certs under the Bill from the Effective Date onwards. The existing certificates issued in paper form will remain valid until their individual date of expiry.

Features of Electronic Certificates

5. The e-certs will have the following security features:
 - (a) Protected from edits, modifications or revisions other than those authorized by the Marine Department;
 - (b) A unique tracking number used for verification;
 - (c) A printable and visible symbol of the Marine Department that confirms the source of issuance.

Verification of Electronic Certificate

6. In general, the following procedures are for the verification of e-certs issued to vessels: -

- (a) To access the verification website by one of the following methods:
 - (i) On the web browser, enter the verification website of the Marine Department. Select the type of certificate and enter the unique tracking number of the certificate; or
 - (ii) Scan the QR code on the certificate to link to the verification website of the Marine Department. The type of certificate and the unique tracking number of the certificate will be automatically filled in. Further information may be required to be entered for some certificates.
- (b) Enter the Captcha code as appeared on the screen.
- (c) The information on the certificate (e.g. whether the certificate is valid or not, the name of the vessel, ship's numbers, etc.) will be displayed.

7. For the verification of e-certs issued to seafarers, users will be asked to input more information for the purposes of protecting personal information.

8. For enquiries, please contact

- (a) Local Vessels Safety Section by telephone no. 2852 4444 or e-mail (lvs1@mardep.gov.hk or lvs2@mardep.gov.hk).
- (b) Licensing and Port Formalities by telephone no. 2852 3082 or e-mail (cmo@mardep.gov.hk).
- (c) Seafarers' Certification and Hong Kong Licence Enquiries by telephone no. 2852 4383 or e-mail (sssem@mardep.gov.hk).

Mr. Q. SHI

Director of Marine (Ag.)

Marine Department

Government of the HKSAR

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