

Hong Kong Fleet Operation Advisory Committee
Issue of Short-Term Statutory Certificate based on
Exemption / Dispensation Letter

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to inform members on the issuance of short-term statutory certificates based on exemptions / dispensation letters issued by the Marine Department (MD).

Background

2. Any Hong Kong-registered ships calling foreign ports may be subjected to port State control inspection. Throughout the years, MD has always advised shipowners, management companies and masters to ensure effective implementation of a safety management system. In this respect, MD always demands ships to conduct pre-arrival check on safety, pollution prevention, security and seafarers matters before arriving foreign ports.
3. Should there be any potential problems / deficiencies identified during pre-arrival check or failure of any equipment or machinery that cannot be rectified before entering any port or during port stay, management companies or masters shall notify the port authority, MD and classification society at the earliest in order to avoid the ship being unduly delayed or detained by the port State control regime. To facilitate ship operation, MD has established a dedicated 24-hour hotline since 1 May 2021 for shipowners and management companies to apply for time-limited exemptions or dispensations for those deficiencies that cannot be promptly remedied at the port of inspection.
4. Recently, MD noticed that certain port State authorities required such time-limited exemptions or dispensations be issued in a manner in aligning with the provisions of the international maritime conventions, e.g., SOLAS, MARPOL, etc., and should clearly specify the conditions imposed.

Measure

5. In response to the requirements of certain port State authorities, MD will inform our Recognized Organizations (RO) that upon receiving requests from shipowners or ship managers, they may issue a short-term or conditional statutory certificate based on the exemption or dispensation letter issued by MD. The validity of the short-term or conditional statutory certificate shall not exceed the expiration date set out on the exemption or dispensation letter.

Way Forward

6. Members are invited to note the new measure as set out in paragraph 5 above.

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Shipping Division
Marine Department