

Shipping Consultative Committee

**Issue of Full Term Hong Kong Licences to Officers
holding Iranian Certificates of Competency**

Purpose

1. The purpose of this paper is to seek members' endorsement for the issue of full term Hong Kong Licences to holders of Certificates of Competency issued by the Islamic Republic of Iran (hereafter refers to as Iran) with immediate effect.

Background

2. Certificates of Competency issued by Iran have been recognized for the issue of Hong Kong Licences under Regulation I/10 of STCW 95 and an undertaking was signed between the Hong Kong and Iran administrations in 2002. Since June 2008 Marine Department has been issuing Hong Kong Licences to applicants holding Iranian certificates for serving on Hong Kong registered ships. Such licences are short term licences with one year validity pursuant to the decision reached by the Validation Panel on a two-year observation period. So far 262 licences have been issued to Iranian certificate holders, all of them are employed by one single shipping company.

3. After more than 14 months of operation, no complaints or adverse comments were received regarding the performance of these officers. Marine Department surveyors also carried out FSQC/PRQC inspections on three vessels managed by the same company and did not find any particular problem or shortcomings with these Iranian officers.

4. In view of the large number of Iranian officers now serving on Hong Kong registered vessels and their good record of performance over the period, the company has requested MD to consider the issue of full term licences to their Iranian officers instead of continuing to issue short term licences in the remaining few months of the two-year observation period. Such an action, if taken, will facilitate operations and help to streamline MD's work in the area.

Proposal

5. Subject to the agreement of SCC, MD would have no objection to the proposal that the two-year observation period can be shortened and full term licence can be issued to Iranian certificate holders with immediate effect. The concession, if granted, should not be treated as a precedent and similar requests in future should be considered on case by case basis according to its merits.

Action Requested

6. Members are invited to comment and endorse the above proposal.

Marine Department
Shipping Division
24 August 2009