



MARITIME CIRCULAR

GUIDANCE NOTE: 006

CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19) - EXTENSION OF THE VALIDITY OF CERTIFICATES ISSUED UNDER THE SEAFARER TRAINING, CERTIFICATION AND WATCHKEEPING (STCW) CONVENTION

1. The Ghana Maritime Authority (GMA) recognizes that in view of the continuing COVID-19 situation, seafarers and ship operators are facing challenges in meeting various statutory requirements provided under Ghana's maritime legislations.
2. In compliance with Government of Ghana's directives on COVID – 19, and to ensure that the flow of commerce by sea is not unnecessarily disrupted which will affect the ability of shipping services and seafarers to continue to deliver vital goods, including medical supplies and foodstuff during this difficult period, and ultimately overcoming this pandemic, there is the need to undertake emergency provisions to address the situation.
3. Consequently, the Authority hereby extends the expiry date of all STCW Certificates – COC/COP/COE including Training and Medical certificates as well as associated endorsements issued by the Director General of the Ghana Maritime Authority in accordance with provisions of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watch keeping for Seafarers (STCW), 1978, as amended.
4. Accordingly, all Certificates issued by the Authority and which are expiring between **1 April and 30 June 2020** (both dates inclusive), will be extended for a period of **three (3) months** from the expiry date of the relevant certificate.
5. The above extension is in the view of the prevailing extraordinary circumstances of the worldwide spread of COVID-19 and taking also into consideration IMO Cir. Letter 4204 Add 5 and Cir. Letter 4204 Add 5 Rev 1 dated 17 March 2020 and 2 April 2020 respectively.
6. The Authority wishes to remind all concerned parties that the safety of life at sea, maritime security, protecting the marine environment and the respect of seafarers as key workers must remain priorities.
7. A copy of this order may be retained onboard for the guidance of officials should it be required.


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14/04/20

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