



Marine notice 09-2020

STCW seafarer certificates and certificates of medical fitness - further arrangements for COVID-19

Purpose

The purpose of this marine notice is to advise flag States, port States, vessel owners, operators, masters and crews that the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) has taken steps to allow the holders of:

- seafarer certificates; and
- certificates of medical fitness;

to continue to perform duties even if the certificate expires during the period between 26 March 2020 and 31 January 2021.

Seafarer certificates are STCW certificates that include certificates of competency, certificates of proficiency as rating, GMDSS radio operator certificates, certificates of safety training and certificates of proficiency as marine cook.

Implementation

During this time of uncertainty that has been caused by COVID-19, and in line with the advice from the International Maritime Organization (IMO), AMSA has taken a pragmatic approach to seafarer certification.

As a result, AMSA has issued exemptions that:

- enable the holders of all AMSA-issued seafarer certificates, endorsements and certificates of medical fitness to continue performing duties beyond the expiry of those certificates; and
- enable owners and masters of ships to permit holders of the above certificates to continue performing duties.

Duration of arrangements

The arrangement that applies to a specific certificate is dependent on the expiry date of that certificate:

- holders of seafarer certificates that expired between 26 March and 31 July 2020 inclusive may continue to perform duties as if the certificate remains in force for a period of 12 months from the expiry date of the certificate; and
- holders of seafarer certificates that expire between 1 August 2020 and 31 January 2021 inclusive may continue to perform duties as if the certificate remains in force until 31 July 2021.

There is no requirement for a vessel owner, operator or seafarer to make application to AMSA for the above measures to apply.

Revalidation

Those seafarers who meet the eligibility requirements for revalidation of their seafarer certificate and have the ability to make an application, are strongly encouraged to apply to revalidate their certificate before it expires, or as soon as possible after that date.

Revalidation of expired certificates

Please note that when the time comes to revalidate an expired seafarer certificate, a new replacement certificate will be issued for a period of five years from the original certificate expiry date.

Further information

Should you require any further assistance or information, please contact AMSA Connect on 1800 627 484, +61 2 6279 5000 or via email to AMSAConnect@amsa.gov.au