



Technical Circular

No.: 020/2020

Date: 24th March 2020

Subject: St. Vincent and the Grenadines – Advice from the Maritime Administration on COVID-19 Pandemic

1. The Administration of St. Vincent and the Grenadines considers the COVID-19 outbreak to be a *force majeure* and vide attached Circular No. GEN 025, has provided following guidance to assist the the Shipowners/ Ship Operators/ Managers and Recognized Organizations;

a. Scheduled Statutory Surveys:

- i. In cases where RO surveyors are not able to undertake scheduled surveys due to restrictions imposed by COVID-19, the Administration will consider applications for extension/postponement under force majeure on a case-by-case basis.
- ii. Duly filled Application form as per GEN 001, signed, stamped and commented by RO is to be submitted to the Administration by the Shipowners/ Ship Operators/ Managers.

b. Dry docking surveys and servicing of ship's equipment:

- i. Extension of a vessel's dry docking survey or servicing of ship's equipment as required by IMO Conventions due to COVID-19 may be requested.
- ii. The Shipowners/ Ship Operators/ Managers to use application form as per GEN 001 circular. The application form duly signed, stamped and commented by RO is to be submitted before the due date of the surveys or expiry date of the statutory certificate in order to avoid Port State Control issues.

c. ISM Internal Audit:

The Administration will, at the ISM Manager's request, extend annual ISM internal audits for up to three (3) months, as per para 12.1 of the ISM Code in cases where audits cannot be carried out due to travel restrictions imposed due to COVID19.

d. Safety Management Certificates (SMC) and International Ship Security Certificates (ISSC):

- i. With regards to SMC and ISSC renewal audits and noting the provisions of ISM Code 13.14 and ISPS Code A-19.3.5, the Administration may authorise its



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Recognised Organisations to issue three (3) month extensions to existing SMC and ISSC Certificates.

- ii. Duly filled Application form as per GEN 001 circular, signed, stamped and commented by RO is to be submitted by the ISM Manager.

e. Maritime Labour Certificates (ML Certificates):

MLC 2006 does not allow extensions to existing MLC Certificates without an MLC inspection. However, due to COVID- 19 restrictions, the Administration may authorise its Recognised Organisations to administratively issue a ML Certificate for three (3) months where the renewal inspection cannot be conducted.

f. Annual Flag State Inspections and Pre-registration inspections:

- i. Due Annual Flag State Inspections will be carried out subject to availability of the Flag State Inspectors.
- ii. In case that Pre-registration inspection cannot take place due to COVID- 19 restrictions, an inspector of the Administration will attend the vessel at a mutually agreed location for an initial general inspection after the registration on a case-by-case basis.

g. Seafarers Employment Agreements and repatriation:

In cases where crew members may have to exceed the twelve (12) months or contractual period onboard as stated in their original Seafarers' Employment Agreement (SEA) because of travel restrictions imposed due to COVID- 19, the Administration will consider such extensions to be force majeure and therefore not a breach of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, as amended. A new SEA is to be signed by both parties with the clause that the seafarer is entitled to repatriation at no cost to the seafarer at seven (7) days notice.

- 2. The temporary measures stated above shall remain in place for a period of three (3) months starting from 18th March 2020 and are subject to review by the Administration as the situation develops.
- 3. Ship owners/ operators and masters of St. Vincent and the Grenadines flagged ships are advised to be guided by above.

Enclosure:

St. Vincent and the Grenadines Marine Circular No. GEN 025, dated 18 March 2020.

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