



Antigua and Barbuda  
Maritime Administration

Miscellaneous Circular  
No. 2020 - 001  
Rev 2  
30 March 2021

**SUBJECT:** Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)

**REFERENCE:**

- a) [Information-notice-2020-002](#) *Novel Coronavirus 2019-NCOV) guidance*
- b) [Miscellaneous Circular 2020-003](#) *Maximum period of shipboard service for seafarers during Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic*
- c) *Antigua and Barbuda Merchant Shipping Act (MSA) 2006 and adhering Regulations*
- d) *Individual Agreements on the Delegation of Authority by ADOMS to relevant Organizations*

**TO:** Ship-owners, operators, masters and officers of Antigua and Barbuda flagged ships, and recognized organizations

**1. PURPOSE**

This Circular provides information and binding direction on the application of procedures due to port restrictions resulting from the outbreak of the COVID -19 virus.

**2. APPLICATION**

This Circular applies to all Antigua and Barbuda flagged Ships

**3. BACKGROUND**

ADOMS will assist seafarers, shipowners, managers, and crewing companies who may have difficulties in conducting crew changes, certification, surveys and internal/external audits due to port restrictions resulting from the outbreak of the COVID- 19 pandemic.

The following policies will now apply under these exceptional circumstances.

**4. OBLIGATIONS AND GUIDANCE/RESPONSIBILITIES**

**1. Crew change procedures**

1. Seafarers are permitted to continue being engaged under their employment agreement beyond 11 months, if arrangements are being made by the shipowner to repatriate the affected seafarer at the next port, which is suitable for a crew change.
2. Seafarers are permitted to continue to sail in their current capacity until the next port, which is suitable for a crew change even if the Antigua and Barbuda flag State endorsement has expired, provided that the issuing Authority of the seafarer's national CoC has been contacted and all efforts have been made to achieve an extension of the national CoC.

3. With respect to 4.1.2 above, documentary evidence thereto (e.g. in form of an e-mail conversation with the Authority in question) must be submitted via the online application system (IASS). Thereupon a provisional CRA can be issued that is valid for one month and can be extended on a case-by-case basis.

## **2. Expired Medical Certificates**

1. The Antigua and Barbuda medical certificate can be extended for up to 3 months or until a new certificate can be issued, whichever comes first and can be extended on a case-by-case basis.
2. For other cases seafarers can trade with an expired Medical Certificate for up to three months.

## **3. Internal Audits**

1. In general, for any Internal Audit, also an initial or annual ISM Audit, a three-month time frame applies. For COVID-19 related cases Non Conformities (NCs) need to be raised within this time frame, provided the documentation within the vessel's ISM is made available.

## **4. Interim Certification**

1. In general, both the ISM as well as the ISPS Code allows for either the extension of an Interim Certificate or the issuance of a consecutive Interim Certificate for a further six months beyond an existing expiry date.
2. The MLC Convention does not apply such regulations.

## **5. Renewal Audits/Surveys**

1. The SOLAS Convention as well as the adjacent Codes thereto allow for the extension of a renewal survey for either a period of grace of 1 month or a 3 month extension in order to reach a port in which the vessel is to be surveyed. Any COVID-19 related restriction will be treated as a case where the ship is in a port where she cannot be surveyed, and an extension can be applied accordingly.
2. The MLC Convention does not apply such regulations.

## **6. External Audits other than the above**

1. Annual or intermediate audits and verifications have a time frame of 6 to 12 months and cannot be extended.
2. This Maritime Administration's current policy on the extension of dry docking remains unaltered.

## **7. Remote Audits**

1. ADOMS encourages the use of technical solutions that avoid certificates becoming invalid due to audits that cannot be conducted and a lack of convention references that allow for the regular extension of company audits.
2. ADOMS will accept requests for remote audits which are confirmed by any of our Recognized Organizations.

## **8. Further Information**

1. How to proceed:
  1. If a ship is due for any of the above-mentioned external surveys, the survey request will be placed with the ship's respective Class, RO or RSO. These Organizations will endeavor to conduct the surveys or propose remote surveys for specific items. In case all efforts to conduct a survey fail, this Maritime Administration will be contacted by either the company or the organization and for ship's eligible for any of the above-mentioned regulations, these will be applied.
  2. Where none of these regulations apply this Maritime Administration may authorize the ship to sail to the next available port where the audit, or inspection can take place. Such authorization will be issued when requested and if port restrictions related to COVID-19 create unexpected and extraordinary circumstances beyond the control of the company of a vessel.
  3. To receive a ship specific authorization letter from this Maritime Administration, the company will have to file an application supported by adequate documentation.
2. Safety Inspections by the Flag State:
  1. Owners / Companies are requested to remain in close contact with ADOMS IID to coordinate ASI / SSI / ISI. ADOMS IID will endeavor to conduct these and apply the necessary flexibility in both the choice for port of attendance and extension of time frames where required.

## **9. Guidelines for COVID-19 Control Onboard Ships**

1. Shipowners should advise master's to be vigilant and monitor their crew for the signs and symptoms of the coronavirus and ensure the protective measures against COVID-19 for seafarers are followed.
2. If a suspected case is identified, then the ship should start an outbreak management plan onboard, even before lab results confirm an infection.
3. The suspected seafarer should wear a mask and be isolated and the master must inform the health authorities at the next port.

4. If the coronavirus test is positive, then anyone who has had close contact with the infected person is to be considered high risk and should remain onboard in their cabin, under quarantine.
5. Steps should be taken to disinfect areas, where the patient has been and all laundry, food utensils and waste should be considered infectious and handled accordingly.
6. It should be noted that port States can, in consultation with the shipowner, then impose a 14-day quarantine period on the ship at port anchorage.

**Issued by**

Antigua and Barbuda  
Department of Marine Services and Merchant Shipping  
(ADOMS) St. John's