

## **Circular 229/2020**

**To:** Deputy Registrars, Vessel Owners, Managers, Masters and other interested parties.

**Subject:** Coronavirus (COVID 19) Guidance relating to the certification of Cook Islands Seafarers and Seafarers serving aboard Cook Islands flagged vessels.

**References:** IMO Circular Letter No.4204/Add.5 – Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance relating to the certification of seafarers

**Date:** 1st April 2020

### **Background**

Since the outbreak of the coronavirus disease in 2019 (COVID-19), Maritime Cook Islands (MCI) have received urgent inquiries from vessel owners and managers regarding the extension of the validity of Cook Islands Certificates of Competency, Proficiency and Endorsement due to difficulties caused by the COVID-19 outbreak.

MCI recognizes that travelling both domestically and internationally has become difficult as travel bans have been imposed by countries all around the world.

Based on the above conditions, MCI considers the COVID-19 outbreak to be a force majeure situation and therefore provide the following guidelines to ensure that Cook Islands seafarers and seafarers serving aboard Cook Islands vessels continue to serve during this time.

### **Cook Islands Certificate of Competency (CoC) and Cook Islands Certificate of Proficiency (CoP)**

As of April 01<sup>st</sup> 2020, MCI will grant a general extension for the validity of all Cook Islands CoC and CoP due to expire before July 01<sup>st</sup> 2020 for an extended period of 4 months from the date of expiry.

The individual seafarer will not be required to submit an application for extension pending the COVID-19 restrictions. MCI will evaluate following the 4 month period to determine if the term will be extended further.

### **Cook Islands Endorsement Certificate (CoE)**

For seafarers holding CoCs and CoPs issued by other states that have expired as at 01<sup>st</sup> April 2020 **OR** are due to expire between the 01<sup>st</sup> April – 01<sup>st</sup> July 2020, and are unable to make arrangements for revalidation due to travel restrictions imposed – MCI will accept continued service aboard the vessel subject to receipt of:

- an official statement issued by the State confirming that the validity of the underlying certificate has been extended accordingly; or
- a general extension of the validity of the national CoCs or CoPs issued by the State issuing the underlying certificate.

MCI will then reissue the CoE to reflect the extension.

MCI may amend this circular at any time, taking into consideration any change or advise provided by Authorities in respect to the COVID-19 outbreak.



Should you require any further assistance or information, please contact the STCW Certification Department email [stcw@maritimecookislands.com](mailto:stcw@maritimecookislands.com)