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CIRCULAR

Paris MoU revised Guidance for dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic

Following the global impact of COVID-19 and identifying the need to apply flexibility under these special circumstances, the Paris MoU has released a revised Guidance for dealing with the COVID-19.

Notice to: Ship Owners/ Managers/ Operators | Surveyors/Auditors

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In Paris MoU member States, national measures are implemented which are to a large extent affecting the port State control regime. In view of a common approach in the region, notwithstanding any possible national measures, and in view of the continued effects of the COVID-19 crisis, as a general principle the following guidelines would be applied on a case by case basis by the relevant port State Authority.

The **Guidance** focusses on the effect of the COVID-19 crisis on the Paris MoU in relation to:

- preventive measure to halt the spread of COVID-19; and
- non-compliance with the Relevant Instruments due to COVID-19

A summary of relevant publications can be found on a dedicated COVID-19 page of the Paris MoU website, [here](#).

PREVENTIVE MEASURE TO HALT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

PSCOs should be guided by the preventive measures adopted by their Maritime Administrations, including the use of appropriate personal protective equipment in order to protect themselves as well as the ship's crew. MAB has noted that Paris MoU member States have implemented measures to limit the number and/or extent of PSC inspections. As shortages in personnel and staffing may become more common, port States which encounter such difficulties could consider to carry out primarily overriding priority inspections.

Whether an inspection takes place remains the decision of the port State. A vessel can be considered self-isolating only if there are no ship-shore interfaces.

SHIP CERTIFICATION ISSUES DUE TO COVID-19

In relation to the COVID-19 situation, it may occur that a ship cannot fulfill the requirements from the Relevant Instruments or the follow-up on inspection results as would normally be required. As a basic principle the primary responsibility regarding compliance with the Conventions remains with the owner and flag State. However in those case where the owner and flag State have demonstrated to take that responsibility, but due to the current situation cannot carry out those duties that normally would be required, the Paris MoU should adopt a pragmatic approach and also be flexible as this is a rapidly developing situation.

The document outlines guidance on:

1. Interval of surveys and audits required by Conventions
2. Duration of statutory certificates
3. Installation of Ballast Water Management System

PERSONNEL ISSUES DUE TO COVID-19

Regarding crew issues, the document outlines the requirements for:

1. MLC, 2006
2. STCW Certification
3. Medical Certificates

RECTIFICATION AND FOLLOW-UP ON INSPECTION REPORTS

In relation to the rectification of recorded or outstanding deficiencies, guidance should be taken from PSCC Instruction 50/2017/11 - Guidance on Detention and Action Taken (including e.g. AT code 48 - as in the agreed flag State condition) and PSCC43-2010-11 - Flag State exemptions.

In case a ship is detained on ISM, but no external audit can be organized, despite best efforts by the company and flag State (which may include temporarily authorization of another RO), the ship may be allowed to proceed to the next port to carry out the external audit.

In order to use AT code 48 in combination with ISM deficiency 15150, a ticket with a justification has to be send to thetis@emsa.europa.eu to activate the possibility in THETIS.

Act now

Ship Owners/ Managers/ Operators should note the Paris MoU guidance in order to take preventive measures to halt the spread of COVID-19 and be advised on possible non-compliance issues with the Relevant Instruments due to COVID-19.