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Circular Letter No.4263
14 April 2020

To: All IMO Members
Intergovernmental organizations
Non-governmental organizations in consultative status

Subject: **Communication from the Cook Islands**

The Government of the Cook Islands has sent the attached communication, dated 8 April 2020, with the request that it is circulated by the Organization.



GOVERNMENT OF THE COOK ISLANDS

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND IMMIGRATION

File Ref: 306.11
Letter No: 103

Wednesday, 8 April 2020

Mr. Kitack Lim
Secretary General
International Maritime Organization
4 Albert Embankment
London SE1 7SR
United Kingdom

Subject: Cook Islands measures in relation to the COVID-19 outbreak

Dear Secretary General,

The recent outbreak of COVID-19 and the increasing restrictions to national and international travels, adopted worldwide, have created unprecedented limitations and difficulties to shipping operations. The Cook Islands has therefore issued a number of circulars containing policies and guidelines aimed at:

- informing its registered fleet and crew onboard about international health and operational good practices related to COVID-19;
- establishing pragmatic temporary measures to ensure continuity to shipping operations.

Please find attached the urgent provisional measures adopted by the Cook Islands.

With reference to the invitation contained in the IMO Circular Letter No. 4204/Add.5, I would be most grateful if the Secretariat could circulate this information to all IMO Member States.

Please accept, Mr. Secretary General, the assurance of my highest consideration

Yours sincerely,

Tapaeru Herrmann,
Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Immigration
COOK ISLANDS



cc: H.E. Captain Ian Finley
Permanent Representative to the IMO

Cook Islands measures in relation to the COVID-19 outbreak:

Mandatory surveys, audits, inspections and validity of statutory certificates

Ref: [MCI Circular 227/2020](#)

Where statutory work, docking or servicing cannot be carried out in circumstances arising due to COVID-19 extensions may be permitted.

Owners and managers experiencing problems in arranging statutory visits, docking or mandatory servicing of critical equipment may submit an extension request to Maritime Cook Islands (MCI), providing supporting objective evidence that would justify the application of extensions. MCI will assess requests on a case by case basis.

Cook Islands Seafarers and Seafarers serving aboard Cook Islands flagged vessels

Ref: [MCI Circular 229/2020](#) and [MCI Circular 224/2020](#)

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

Cook Islands Endorsement certificates may be extended where seafarers are unable to make arrangements for revalidation of underlying certificates due to travel restrictions imposed. The Cook Islands will accept continued service aboard its vessels 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.

Furthermore, the Cook Islands will issue extraordinary exemptions from the requirements of MLC Standard A2.4 (ii) for any seafarer who is not permitted to disembark, and as a result will be on board the vessel for more than 11 months.

Format of documentation on board Cook Islands' Vessels

Ref: [MCI Circular 228/2020](#)

The Cook Islands has experienced increasing difficulty in delivering original documents and certificates onboard its registered vessels. Therefore, in consideration of the exceptional circumstances, the Cook Islands will allow temporarily for copies of certificates and other official documents to be kept onboard instead of originals.

Authorities can address enquiries about the validity of any pdf/printed copy of the Cook Islands official documents to:

- fleet@maritimecookislands.com; and/or

- technical@maritimecookislands.com.

All Cook Islands circulars with reference to the COVID-19 emergency issued so far and to be released in the future can be found on Maritime Cook Islands website at the following link: <https://www.maritimecookislands.com/circulars/covid-19/>.