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भारत सरकार/GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

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ENGINEERING CIRCULAR NO. 07 OF 2017

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18th December, 2017

Sub : Issuance of Statutory Certificates by Recognized Organizations in Electronic format.

1. Background:

- a) Various Recognized Organizations have requested the Directorate General of Shipping to permit issuance of statutory certificates to Indian Flag vessels in electronic format. INSA (Indian National Ship Owners' Association) have also requested the Directorate to permit issuance of e-statutory certificates by Recognized Organizations citing its advantages over the paper certificates.
- b) Realizing the advantages of electronic certificates such as faster delivery on board, ease to manage, reduced risk of loss and damage.
- c) Realizing further that the electronic certificates also prevents falsification of certificates as opposed to signed paper certificates, as e-certificates allows for on-line verification of their authenticity and it also helps companies demonstrate their societal commitment by helping reduce their carbon footprint.
- d) Realizing also that to facilitate use and acceptance of e-certificates, IMO issued "Guidelines for the use of Electronic Certificates" vide FAL.5/Circ.39/Rev.2 dated 20th April 2016. The said circular details the security features to be incorporated in the electronic certificates and the procedure for the verification of the authenticity of electronic certificates.
- e) Therefore, in accordance with Government of India policy of "Ease of doing business" and "Digital India" and to enhance the service delivery of GOI/RO and further to prevent falsification of statutory certificates, the Competent authority has decided to permit issuance of electronic statutory certificates to Indian Flag Cargo vessels by the Recognized Organizations under certain conditions detailed in this circular.

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2. Applicability:

- a) This circular is applicable only to Statutory Certificates issued by Recognized Organizations to Cargo vessels on behalf of the Indian Administration.
- b) This Circular is applicable to the categories of Statutory certificates detailed in IMO "List of Certificates and Documents required to be carried on board ships 2017" issued vide FAL.2/Circ.131MEPC.1/Circ.873MSC.1/Circ.1586 LEG.2/Circ.3 dated 17 July 2017, as amended.
- c) The Recognized organizations are thus permitted to issue only those Statutory E-Certificates (detailed in Paragraph 2 a) &b) above) for which they are respectively authorized for, as per the authorization granted by Indian Administration via valid RO agreement and DGS Orders/circulars/notices issued from time to time.

3. Requirements:

- a) The electronic certificate shall include following required security features detailed in IMO "Guidelines for the use of Electronic Certificates" (FAL.5/Circ.39/Rev.2 dated 20th April 2016):
 - i) validity and consistency with the format and content required by the relevant international convention or instrument, as applicable.
 - ii) protected from edits, modifications or revisions other than those authorized by the issuer or the Administration.
 - iii) a unique tracking number used for verification. Unique tracking number means a string of numbers, letters or symbols used as an identifier to distinguish an electronic certificate issued by a Recognized Organization from any other electronic certificate issued by the same Recognized Organization.
 - iv) a printable and visible symbol that confirms the source of issuance.
- b) Recognized Organizations that use websites for online viewing or verifying electronic certificates shall ensure that these sites are constructed and managed in accordance with established information security standards for access control, fraud prevention, resistance to cyberattacks and resilience to man-made and natural disasters.
- c) Electronic signatures applied to electronic certificates shall meet authentication standards equivalent to Indian Information Technology Act, 2000 as amended.
- d) Recognized Organizations issuing electronic certificates and Owner or Manager of

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the ship shall ensure the availability of detailed procedure/instructions for verifying the information contained in the electronic certificate, including confirmation of periodic endorsements, when necessary, on board the ship. Verifying means a reliable, secure and continuously available process to confirm the authenticity and validity of an electronic certificate using the unique tracking number and other data contained on or embedded in the electronic certificate.

- e) Each Recognized Organization intending to issue electronic certificate shall inform to the Directorate within 15 days of issue of this circular, the categories of certificates (detailed in IMO "List of Certificates and Documents required to be carried on board ships 2017" that they intend to issue in electronic form. This information is required to be communicated to the IMO by the Indian Administration through the relevant module in the Global Integrated Shipping Information System (GISIS) as per Clause 6 of FAL.5/Circ.39/Rev.2 for information and circulation among member states.

4. Instructions to Indian Flag State Inspectors and Port State Control Officers:

- a) Flag state inspectors (FSI) and Port State Control Officers (PSCO) shall accept electronic certificates containing the features detailed above.
- b) If considered necessary, the FSI/PSCO may verify the authenticity of the certificates using the procedure (issued by Recognized Organization) and available on board the ship carrying electronic certificates.

5. Instructions to Recognized Organizations/Administration Surveyors:

Many foreign going and some coastal Indian Flag vessels are dual classed. In such cases and even in cases where a vessel is single classed, it may be possible that one Recognized Organization has issued a Statutory Certificate in electronic form and owner/operator may opt to carry out Annual/Periodic/intermediate surveys done by another RO or Administration Surveyors. In all such cases the following procedures may be adopted for endorsement of an electronic Statutory Certificate issued by a RO other than the one conducting the annual/intermediate/periodic surveys:

- a) Conduct of Annual/Intermediate/Periodic survey by a RO which has not issued the said statutory certificate in e-format:
 - i) RO conducting the said survey to verify the authenticity of the e-certificate.
 - ii) Carry out the survey.
 - iii) After satisfactory completion of the said survey, endorse the print out of the e-statutory certificate for the particular survey (1st



Annual/2ndAnnual/Intermediate/Periodical and so on) and a survey report indicating the type (SEQ, SRT and so on); the nature of the survey (1st/2nd/3rd/4th Annual/Intermediate/Periodical); date of endorsement; name of the office and surveyor conducting the survey and place of survey to be issued to the Master.

- iv) RO which conducted the said survey to forward a copy of the said survey report electronically to the RO which has issued the e-statutory certificate within one working day of completion of the said survey.
- v) RO which has issued the said statutory certificate in e-format shall ensure that the said endorsement is reflected on the e-statutory certificate downloadable from their website within 2 working days of the receipt of the report

b) In case the survey is completed by the Administration Surveyor:

- i) Surveyor to verify the authenticity of the e-certificate.
- ii) Carry out the survey.
- iii) After satisfactory completion of the said survey, endorse the print out of the statutory e-certificate for the particular survey(1st/2nd/3rd/4th Annual/Intermediate/Periodical).
- iv) Issue a report to the Master indicating type of survey (SEQ/SRT/IOPP/IAPP and so on); the nature of survey (1st /2nd/3rd/4th Annual/Intermediate/Periodic); date of endorsement; name of the Mercantile Marine Department and the surveyor conducting the survey and place of survey.
- v) Owner/Manager/Master to forward the report stated in Paragraph 5, b), iv) above within one working day to the RO which has issued the said e-statutory certificate.
- vi) The RO which has issued the said statutory certificate shall ensure that the said endorsement is reflected on the e-statutory certificate downloadable from their website within 2 working days after receipt of such report.

6. Issuance of Short Term Statutory e-certificates:

- a) There may be situations such as Port State detentions necessitating issuance of short term certificate by a RO after due concurrence of the competent authority in the Directorate General of shipping.

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- b) Under such situations, the RO attending the vessel may issue short term statutory certificate and the necessary attachments to the certificate in electronic format and ensure that the details of same is available in its website.
- c) The same has to be informed immediately to the RO which has issued the full-term certificate.
- d) The RO (which has issued the full-term statutory certificate earlier) on receipt of such report shall ensure that the full-term certificate is withdrawn from their online system and necessary updating indicating withdrawal is reflected on the website.
- e) The RO issuing full term certificate subsequently to inform immediately to the RO which had issued the short-term certificate so that short term certificate can be withdrawn by the RO who issued the same.

7. Note:

- a) At present only Cargo Ship Statutory Certificates issued by Recognized Organization on behalf of Indian Administration are being permitted to be issued in an electronic form at shipowner/operator option.
- b) Statutory Certificates issued by Indian Administration shall at present continue to be in signed paper form irrespective of whether the vessel is a cargo or passenger ship.
- c) Shipowners and operators of Indian Flag vessels who intend to carry and use electronic certificates shall ensure that these certificates are controlled through the safety management system, as described in section 11 of the International Safety Management Code.

This Circular is issued with the approval of the Competent Authority.


(Vikrant Rai)

Engineer and Ship Surveyor cum Dy.DG (Tech)

To

1. CS/NA/CSS/Add. DG/ Sr. PS To DG
2. Principal Officer, Mercantile Marine Department, Mumbai/Chennai/Kolkata/Kochi/Kandla.
3. The Surveyor In-charge, Mercantile Marine Department, Jamnagar/Murmagoa/ Manglore/ Tuticorine/Vishakapatnam/Paradip/Haldia/Port Blair/Nodia
4. All Recognized organizations
5. INSA/ICSSA
6. Nautical/Naval Arch./Training/SD Branch of the Dte.
7. Hindi Section for translation in Hindi
8. Computer Cell