



Title:	Guidance for the Issuance of Short-Term, Provisional and/or Extended Certificates by Recognized Organizations	
To:	Deputy Registrars, Ship Owners, ISM Operators, Recognized Organizations, Recognized Security Organizations, Shipping Agents, General Safety Inspectors	
MMN Superseded:	MMN-24-003r1; MMN-24-003 and MSN-0003 (23 September 2024; 15 February 2024; and 9 January 2002)	Revision No.: 2
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1. REFERENCE

- Survey Guidelines under the Harmonized System of Survey and Certification (HSSC), in its latest revision.
- Resolution A.1118(30) Revised Guidelines on the Implementation of the International Safety Management (ISM) Code by Administrations.
- Duties of Surveyors under Statutory Conventions and Codes, IACS Rec. No. 98 2007/Rev.3 2019. or in its latest revision.
- Code for Recognized Organizations (RO Code) Resolution MEPC.237(65) and MSC.349(92).

2. PURPOSE

2.1. The purpose of this notice is to guide Recognized Organizations, Recognized Security Organizations, Operators, and Deputy Registrars on the requirements for issuing Short-Term and Extended Certificates and *Dispensations* to vessels flying the flag of Belize.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1. The main purpose of surveys is to ensure that ships and their equipment comply with international and national safety regulations. This ensures that vessels are fit to proceed to sea without endangering the ship, the environment, or persons on board. In exceptional circumstances where deficiencies cannot be rectified at the vessel's location, the Administration may permit Recognized Organizations (ROs) to issue Short-Term or Extended Certificates as defined in *subsection 4*, subject to Administrative RO Agreement.

3.2. Such permission shall only be granted if deemed reasonable and appropriate. In these circumstances, the existing certificate(s) should be downgraded, and a Short-Term or Extended Certificate should be issued, specifying any special conditions.

3.3. The vessel shall receive a *Dispensation* from the Administration to confirm the Flag agreement regarding the conditions under which the certificates have been downgraded.



Note: Short-Term and/or Extended Certificates can only be issued if the deficiencies are not considered a risk to navigation, the environment, or seafarers. Any deficiencies that are considered a risk will result in the withdrawal of the relevant certificate(s) until the deficiencies are fully rectified.

4. DEFINITION

4.1. Full-Term Certificate:

4.1.1. As per the Survey Guidelines under the Harmonized System of Survey and Certification (HSSC), in its latest revision, a Full-Term Certificate is issued to a ship upon satisfactory completion of an initial or renewal survey and has a maximum validity of five (5) years for cargo ship certificates and one (1) year for passenger ships. A Full-Term Certificate may only be issued or reissued if the vessel fully complies with the requirements of the relevant regulation.

4.2. Short-Term Certificate:

4.2.1. A Short-Term Certificate is issued for a period shorter than that of a Full-Term Certificate. It allows a vessel to proceed to sea while providing a period for rectification of deficiencies that cannot be repaired immediately, provided that this permission does not endanger the ship, persons on board, or present an unreasonable threat to the environment.

4.2.2. Short-term Certificates are also issued to vessel proceeding on a single delivery voyage.

4.3. Extended Certificates:

4.3.1. SOLAS and other mandatory IMO instruments allow the Administration to extend vessel certificates in special circumstances. For example, if a ship is at sea when a certificate expires, or if it cannot comply with requirements due to force majeure.

4.4. Dispensation:

4.4.1. When a Short-Term or Extended Certificate is issued, the Administration shall also issue a *Dispensation*, which must be kept on board and presented to PSC officials upon request.

4.4.2. All *Dispensations* shall be subject to verification of alternative arrangements by the vessel's RO and the provision of supporting documents (e.g., agreements with service providers, technician reports, purchase agreements for spares) to the Administration. Additionally, these alternative arrangements must be communicated to the crew, pilot, PSC, or any other interested party as required.



4.5. New (Initial) ISM, ISPS and MLC Certification

- 4.5.1. The initial audit for compliance with the Safety Management Certificate (SMC), International Ship Security Certificate (ISSC), and Maritime Labour Convention (MLC 2006) standards, including onboard verification, must be completed within the validity period of the Interim Certificate (six months).
- 4.5.2. If the full-term certificate cannot be issued immediately following this audit, the Recognized Organization (RO) may issue a **Provisional Certificate**, which will be valid for up to five months from the date of the initial audit.
- **Interim Certificate:** Valid for 6 months (SMC, ISSC, MLC) – for initial verification.
 - **Provisional Certificate:** Valid for 5 months (SMC, ISSC, MLC) – if the full-term certificate cannot be issued immediately.

Notes:

- The Provisional Certificate issued for SMC, ISSC, and MLC at the initial audit/inspection is solely for the purpose of allowing the RO to issue the full-term certificate. It does not extend the validity of the full-term certificate. The five months of the Provisional Certificate will be included within the full-term period. Consequently, the full-term certificate will be valid for five years, starting from the date of the initial audit.
- Once the full-term certificate is issued, the Provisional Certificate will be replaced by the full-term certificate onboard.

The purpose of the Provisional Certificate is solely to provide time for the full-term SMC, ISSC, or MLC certificate to be issued and placed onboard.

5. ACTIONS REQUIRED

5.1. AUTHORIZATION

- 5.1.1. All Recognized Organizations authorized to act on behalf of the International Merchant Marine Registry of Belize must, upon identifying conditions that affect the validity of a Full-Term Certificate and cannot be rectified at the survey port, or when initial verification for SMC, ISSC, and MLC cannot be completed, promptly notify the Administration.



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- 5.1.2. If necessary, the RO shall request authorization from the Administration to downgrade the vessel's Full-Term Certificate to a Short-Term or Extended Certificate, or, in the case of initial verification for SMC, ISSC, and MLC, issue Provisional Certificates.
- 5.1.3. The RO shall provide the Administration with all necessary alternative arrangements or supporting documentation in support of such a request.
- 5.1.4. RO must also request authorization from flag before survey and certification of vessels engaged on single delivery voyages.

5.2. SHORT-TERM CERTIFICATES

- 5.2.1. Aside from single delivery voyages, a Short-Term or Extended Certificate issued due to deficiencies or defects that cannot be immediately rectified must be accompanied by a *Dispensation Letter* issued by the Administration.

5.3. DISPENSATION LETTER APPLICATION

- 5.3.1. Request for *Dispensations* must be submitted by the Deputy Registrar or Designated Office of the vessel, following the procedures outlined in Merchant Marine Notice [MMN-19-002](#), in its latest revision, concerning the Requirements for the issuance of Technical Certificates.

6. CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1. Short-Term and/or Extended Certificates shall not be issued without prior authorization from the Administration.
- 6.2. Before issuing Short-Term Certificates for Single Delivery Voyages, the RO must thoroughly verify the vessel's seaworthiness in accordance with the relevant conventions. The certificates shall clearly outline the conditions under which they are issued.
- 6.3. The certificates shall clearly state "Short-Term" and include a notation detailing the deficiencies under which the certificates have been granted.
- 6.4. A Short-Term Certificate should not be seen by the Recognized Organization as a means to allow a vessel to proceed to sea in an unseaworthy condition.
- 6.5. MLC 2006, Standard A5.1.3, concerning the Interim Maritime Labour Convention Certificate.



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6.6. ISPS Code, Part A, Section 19, concerning the Interim International Ship Security Certificate.

6.7. ISM Code, Part B, Section 14, concerning the Interim Certificate.

7. FEES

7.1. The applicable fees for the issuance of statutory certificates will be in accordance with [MMN-24-005](#) (in its latest revision), which outlines the Administrative Fees for Statutory Certificates issued and endorsed on behalf of IMMARBE.

8. DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

8.1 Failure to adhere to the requirements outlined in this Notice may result in disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by IMMARBE. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Suspension or revocation of the vessel's certification.
- Imposition of fines or penalties.
- Restrictions on the vessel's operations or trading activities.
- Other legal actions as specified under the Belize Merchant Ships (Registration) Act, (in its latest revision), and Statutory Instrument 56 of 1999 (as revised).

It is imperative that all parties adhere fully to the procedures and requirements outlined in this Notice to ensure proper certification and avoid regulatory issues.

The Administration encourages Shipowners, Operators, Deputy Registrars, and Recognized Organizations to review and comply with the contents of this Notice and to ensure that its provisions are enforced on vessels registered with IMMARBE.

IMMARBE appreciates your cooperation and assistance.

This notice was issued in Belize City, Belize on 21 November 2024.

Eng. Eduardo Simon
Technical Manager
IMMARBE



Valarie Lanza (Mrs.)
Senior Deputy Registrar
IMMARBE

Any queries related to this Notice shall be directed to technicalservices@immarbe.com