

Paris, Indian & Tokyo MoUs Press Releases due to COVID-19 Coronavirus

The Paris, Tokyo and Indian Ocean MoUs on Port State Control have issued guidance for dealing with the impact of COVID-19 outbreak.

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

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The Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) on Port State Control (PSC) acknowledge the crisis which the international shipping industry is facing.

The MoUs are working to help Member Authorities protect the health and safety of our Port State Control Officers and the seafarers on the ships. The MoUs acknowledge further that currently it is essential to keep supply chains open and that it is proving very difficult for shipowners to arrange vessel surveys.

The **Paris MoU guidance** sets out parameters for the adoption of a pragmatic approach to be taken in the region. The key to this approach is the recognition that measures are being taken by flag States recognising the challenges the maritime industry is facing. The guidance for the port State control Authorities has been drafted regarding:

- Impact of delays for surveys, inspections and audits
- extensions of validity of the ship's certificates
- extended periods of service on board
- delaying periods for personnel certification (STCW'95 and MLC,2006)

As a general principle, a pragmatic approach regarding the mentioned issues is suggested to be taken on a **case-by-case basis for periods up to maximum three months**. In such cases it is expected that there is active involvement of the flag State, and, if appropriate, the Recognised Organisation. This would include evidence that the ship has a plan that covers how the ship will be brought back in compliance with the requirements.

The **Indian MoU guidance** and the **Tokyo MoU guidance** are prepared based on the general principle that requests/issues from the operators/owners/managers would be considered on a **case-to-case basis** by the relevant port State Authority. In accordance with the guidances, the port State Authorities should request the operator/owner/manager concerned to confirm that the flag State and/or the RO, relevant seafarers' organizations (as appropriate) have been involved in the process. For consideration of the request by the port State Authority, operators/owners/ship managers concerned should provide a plan or process containing equivalent solutions to address the COVID-19 situation and letters of dispensation or exemption issued by the flag State or RO,

under which the period of grace for delaying surveys, inspections or audits should be reflected, however, such period at this moment, **shall not be exceeding more than three months from the date of expiry of the applicable certificates**, in accordance with the relevant regulations of the conventions.

Act now

Ship Owners/ Managers/ Operators should take into consideration the issued Press Releases and take all precautions and measures with the Flag Administration and URACOS Head Office assistance in the case of due surveys/ audits in order to protect their vessels and avoid any issues with the local Port State Control Authorities.

