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TRAFICOM/356278/05.01.13.05/2021
22th July 2021

His Excellency Kitack Lim

Secretary General
International Maritime Organization
4 Albert Embankment
SE1 7SR London
United Kingdom

Subject: Extension of the validity of Certificates of Competency, Certificates of Proficiency and Endorsements during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak

Dear Secretary General,

With reference to the Circular Letters 4260, 4260/Add.1 and 4260/Add.2 regarding extension of the validity of maritime personnel certificates during COVID-19 outbreak, I would like to further update you on the measures taken by Finland.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, appropriate and necessary changes have been made in current legislation on a temporary bases. The Finnish Parliament has decided to accept amendments regarding the validity of seafarers' certificates. The amendment entered into force 1 July 2021.

The amendments allow for an extension of the validity of fixed-term certificates of competency and certificates of proficiency that expire no later than 31 December 2021. The extension is valid for six months from the original expiration date, and no application is required. The extension also applies to certificates whose validity has already been extended; for these certificates, the new period of validity will begin from the expiration date of the previous extension. No separate application is required for the extension.

Traficom may also grant dispensations regarding certificates of proficiency referred to in section 98 of the Act on Transport Services, if this is necessary because of a disruption caused by the COVID-19 epidemic or some other circumstance of exceptional necessity. A dispensation may be granted, if it does not put life, property or the environment at risk. Dispensations may be valid for a maximum of six months at a time. Shipowners must apply for the dispensation and declare the circumstances of exceptional necessity. The provisions are in force until 31 December 2021.

During the COVID-19 epidemic, if a foreign competent authority extends the validity of a certificate of competency or certificate of proficiency referred to in section 98, subsections 3 and 4 of the Act on Transport Services granted to a person serving on board a Finnish vessel, the endorsement issued by Traficom will expire on the same date as the certificate of competency or certificate of proficiency recognized by the endorsement, but no later than 30 April 2022.

I would appreciate if you could circulate the measures developed by Finland to the attention of the Member States and any interested parties.

Yours sincerely



Jukka Sironen
Head of Services, Airworthiness, Personal licensing and Safety information
On behalf of the Deputy Director-General of Transport System Services
Finnish Transport and Communications Agency, Traficom

