



# BERMUDA MERCHANT SHIPPING NOTICE

Electronic Certification

2021-033

## Application

Ship Owners, Managers, Masters and Officers of Bermuda Registered ships

## References

IMO Facilitation Committee FAL.5/Circ.39/Rev.2.

## Summary

This Shipping Notice describes the implementation by the BSMA of Electronic Certificates and the means by which their validity may be verified, as required by FAL.5/Circ.39/Rev.2.

This Notice was issued on 6 October 2021.

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## 1. Introduction

- (1) The Bermuda Shipping and Maritime Authority (BSMA) has updated the systems it uses to manage and record its survey activities. The new system, named BOSS (Bermuda On-Line Shipping Services), will introduce digital signatures for certain certificates which will be issued electronically in a PDF format; these will be referred to as 'Digital Certificates'. The digital signing service will be provided by Global Sign as a trusted intermediary.
- (2) The introduction of Digital Certificates is expected to provide a number of advantages compared with traditional paper certificates. These include:
  - a. **Speed of delivery:** an original certificate can be on board a ship within minutes;
  - b. **Cost:** digital certificates will not need to be couriered to ships;
  - c. **Security:** each certificate will have a means of verification;
  - d. **Environmental:** less paper and fewer couriered packages.

(3) The International Maritime Organisation (IMO) has issued guidance in Circular FAL.5/Circ.39/Rev.2 for the use of electronic certificates and BSMA issued certificates comply with this guidance.

(4) Electronic certificates will be accepted by Port State Control Officers based on the guidance provided in the Circular.

## 2. Certificates to be Digitally Signed

(1) The following certificates will be issued as Digital Certificates from the 12<sup>th</sup> October 2021:

- a. STCW Endorsements
- b. Certificates of Registration
- c. CLC Certificates (Bunker)
- d. CLC Certificates (Cargo)
- e. Nairobi Convention Wreck Removal Certificates
- f. ISM Document of Compliance Certificates (DOC)
- g. ISM Safety Management Certificates (SMC)
- h. ISPS Certificates (ISSC)
- i. MLC Certificates
- j. Minimum Safe Manning Documents
- k. Permanent and Short Term Exemption Certificates and Statements
- l. Continuous Synopsis Record (CSR)
- m. Passenger Ship Safety Certificates (PSSC)

(2) Paper certificates issued prior to 12<sup>th</sup> of October 2021 will continue to be valid until the expiry date stated on the certificate and these will be replaced with a digital certificate the next time that they are re-issued. Paper certificates will continue to be issued on request or by arrangement and verification of the paper certificate will be the same as detailed in section 3 below.

## 3. Verification

(1) Digital Certificates can be verified in either of the following ways:

- a. **QR Code** – The simplest method to verify the Digital Certificate is by scanning the QR Code (Quick Response Code) located in the upper right-hand corner of the Digital Certificate using any internet connected device with a camera and a QR Code reader installed. The QR Code contains a URL (Uniform Resource Locator) which links to the BSMA's verification system. The URL will return a web page confirming the details of the certificate which should correspond to the certificate available on board the ship.
- b. **Unique Tracking Number** – Visit <https://boss.bermudashipping.bm> and enter the Unique Tracking Number (found at the top of the Digital Certificate) and the date of issue; this will return a web page confirming the details of the certificate which should correspond to the certificate available on board the ship.

## 4. Document Management

(1) Operators of ships that carry Digital Certificates should ensure that these documents are controlled through the safety management system, as described in Section 11 of the ISM Code.

- (2) In this regard, it is acceptable for the electronic certification to be printed and placed in the ship's file for inspection, however, it is important to note that the electronic version of the certificate should be considered as the original in the event of any query.
- (3) The requirement under STCW Regulation 1/2, paragraph 11 to hold original Endorsements is satisfied by having the electronic version of the certificate available.

## 5. Periodic Endorsements

- (1) Where a certificate requires endorsement for an annual, intermediate or additional verification, this will be done in the following ways:

### (2) Survey Undertaken by the BSMA

- a. Upon successful completion of the survey, the Surveyor will remotely endorse the certificate on our database, and send the endorsed electronic certificate by email.
- b. If the Surveyor is unable to access the internet onboard the ship, the actions detailed in 5.2.a will be carried out at the next available opportunity, as soon as the Surveyor is able to gain internet access.
- c. In the case that a ship needs an endorsed certificate as a matter of urgency (for instance it is the last day of their survey window) then the attending Surveyor should print the digital certificate in force at the time of attendance and endorse by hand. Upon receipt of the endorsed Digital Certificate, the hand signed certificate should be discarded.

### (3) Survey Undertaken by a Recognised Organisation (RO)

- a. Upon successful completion of the inspection, the RO surveyor will contact the BSMA who will endorse the certificate on our system on behalf of the RO, and send the endorsed electronic certificate by email.
- b. If the survey is undertaken outside of normal office hours, this will be done at the earliest opportunity when the office reopens.
- c. In the case that a ship needs an endorsed certificate as a matter of urgency (for instance it is the last day of their survey window) then the attending RO surveyor should print the digital certificate in force at the time of attendance and endorse by hand. Upon receipt of the endorsed Digital Certificate, the hand signed certificate should be discarded.

## 6. Renewal Endorsements

- (1) Where a certificate requires endorsement for the renewal verification, this will be done in the following ways:

### (2) Survey Undertaken by the BSMA

- a. Upon successful completion of the renewal survey, the Surveyor will remotely endorse the certificate on our database, and then issue and send the new full term electronic certificate by email.

- b. If the Surveyor is unable to access the internet onboard the ship, the actions detailed in 6.2.a will be carried out at the next available opportunity, as soon as the Surveyor is able to gain internet access.
- c. In the case that a ship needs an endorsed certificate as a matter of urgency (for instance it is the last day of their survey window) then the attending Surveyor should print the digital certificate in force at the time of attendance and sign by hand. Upon receipt of the endorsed Digital Certificate, the hand signed certificate should be discarded.

### **(3) Survey Undertaken by a Recognised Organisation (RO)**

- a. Upon successful completion of the inspection, the RO surveyor will contact the BSMA who will endorse the certificate on our system on behalf of the RO and send the new full term certificate by email.
- b. If the survey is undertaken outside of normal office hours, this will be done at the earliest opportunity when the office reopens.
- c. In the case that a ship needs an endorsed certificate as a matter of urgency (for instance it is the last day of their survey window) then the attending RO surveyor should print the digital certificate in force at the time of the attendance and sign by hand. Upon receipt of the endorsed Digital Certificate, the hand signed certificate should be discarded.