



G-B INTERNATIONAL

INTERNATIONAL SHIPS REGISTRY OF GUINEA-BISSAU

Marine Notice Nr. 05/ 2023,12/12/2023

Subject: “G-B I.S.R. Policy on Endorsement of Certificates of Competency (C.o.C) Issued by Foreign Maritime Administrations and Recognized by G-B I.S.R., (STCW '78, Reg. I/10 Recognition of Certificates)”

Ref. : (a) MSC.1/Circ.1164/Rev.27, 27 June 2023;
(b) MSC.1/Circ.1450, 24 January 2013.

To: Shipowners, Ship operators, Managers, Masters, Deputy Registrars, Recognized Organizations (ROs), Port State Control Authorities - MoUs, and Seafarers on board G-B I.S.R. vessels.

Summary: The current Marine Notice outlines the Guinea-Bissau International Ships Registry (G-B I.S.R.) applicable policy and related procedures on issuing Endorsements of Certificates of Competency (C.o.C), issued by third parties as per the STCW '78, as amended requirements, according to Regulation I/10 “*Recognition of Certificates*” and in addition is informing ship-owners and their agents, Maritime Education Training Institutes, Seafarer Recruitment, and Placement Service (SRPS) providers, Port State Control Authorities and holders of Certificates of Competency (CoC) issued by foreign administrations on the applicable procedures and requirements.

1. Background

1.1. Regulation I/2 (“*Certificates and Endorsements*”) of the STCW '78 Convention as amended (STCW '78 as amended), requires that each Administration that recognizes a foreign certificate of competency under Regulation I/10 (“*Recognition of Certificates*”) of the aforementioned Convention, shall endorse such a certificate to attest its recognition. It is noted that the above requirement applies only to Masters and Officers holding valid Certificates of Competency (C.o.C) issued in accordance with the relevant provisions of the STCW '78 Convention as amended, by a competent Authority whose certificates of competency are recognized by the G-B I.S.R. at the time of the application.

1.2. No Master or Officer shall serve on board G-B I.S.R. vessels without a valid STCW '78, as amended Certificate of Competency and G-B I.S.R. Endorsement attesting the recognition of the Certificate of Competency or a valid proof that an application for the issue of an endorsement has been made to the G.B. I.S.R., as per provisions of Reg. I/10.

2. Recognition of Certificates of Competency (C.o.C) by Issuing Authorities Parties to the STCW '78 Convention

2.1. The G-B I.S.R. is recognizing in principle by endorsement in accordance with regulation I/2, par.7, a certificate issued by or under the authority of another party to a master, officer, or radio operator (C.o.C.) issued by Parties to the STCW '78 Convention, as amended, confirmed to have communicated information which demonstrates that full and complete effect is given to the relevant provisions of the Convention

Page 1 of 4

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under the IMO MSC.1/Circ.1163, as applicable. This gives Owners and Managers the flexibility on the manning of their vessels in a way that suits their operational needs.

2.2. The G-B I.S.R. requires only Masters and Officers serving on Guinea-Bissau flagged vessels to carry an endorsement to be issued by the G-B I.S.R., attesting to the recognition of their certificate of competency issued by a foreign Administration. The above procedure as prescribed by Regulation I/10 (*“Recognition of Certificates”*) is gradually implemented by this Administration based on MSC.1/Circ. 1450/24th January 2013 (*“Guidance on Arrangements between Parties to Allow for Recognition of Certificates under Regulation I/10 of the STCW Convention”*) and respective applicable provisions of Regulation I/7 *“Communication of Information”* as further prescribed in article IV and section A-I/7 of the STCW Code.¹

3. G-B I.S.R. Procedures to be Followed for the Issuance of Endorsement Certificate based on C.o.C Issued by Administrations Parties to the STCW Convention

3.1. As indicated above the G-B I.S.R. Administration may recognize all national C.o.C issued by the countries listed on the IMO MSC.1 Circ. 1163/Rev.13, 18th October 2021, and issues an "Endorsement Attesting the Recognition of a Certificate Under the Provisions of the Regulation 1/10 of the STCW 1995" Convention for Masters, deck and engine officers.

3.2. It is the responsibility of shipowners/managers to ensure that seafarers' applications, duly completed, are submitted to this Administration before the vessel's departure. In addition, it is the owner's responsibility to verify the authenticity with the issuing Authority before applying the G-B I.S.R.

3.3. The applicant will be issued a Letter of "Confirmation of Receipt of Application" valid for a three-month period enabling him to perform his duties on board the vessel, as per respective provisions of Regulation I/10, par. 5.

3.4. Certificates and endorsements issued by this Administration under the provisions of Regulation I/10, par. 6 in recognition of, or attesting the recognition of, a certificate issued by another Party shall not be used as the basis for further recognition by another Administration.

3.5. The G-B I.S.R. may carry out checks on both the quality and the validity of all applications submitted. Each application, if acceptable for the issuance of an endorsement, will be acknowledged with a Confirmation of Receipt of Application (CRA). The CRA will be e-mailed and submitted in hard-copy format directly to the company making the application which should send this on to the vessel immediately. The CRA allows the seafarer to serve for a period of 3 months without the G-B I.S.R. endorsement being available on board. If the application is complete and the officer is deemed suitable, an endorsement will be issued, normally within a few days of receipt of the application.

3.6. Original versions of crew certification must be available onboard. Incorrect or incomplete crew documentation can result in Port State Control deficiencies or detentions.

¹ As of the date of the issuance of this Mar. Notice the following issuing authorities Parties to the STCW Convention on an indicative and non-exhaustive basis have been / are recognized, pursuant to MSC.1/Circ. 1163/Rev. 13, 18th October 2021: Honduras, Azerbaijan, Turkey, Georgia, Panama, Germany, Cook Islands, Ukraine, South Africa, Russia, Lithuania, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, Indonesia, China, Myanmar, Vietnam, Philippines, Estonia, Syria, Pakistan, the UK of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Poland, Bulgaria & Ireland.



4. Information & Guidance on Port State Control Proceedings on STCW Endorsement Certificates Recognition

4.1. As indicated above this Administration only issues an STCW Endorsement Certificate, known commonly as a “Certificate of Endorsement (COE)”, based on recognition of an acceptable national STCW Certificate issued by a country on the IMO “White List” of countries that is in compliance with the provisions of the STCW Convention.

4.2. COEs are valid for three (3) years or until the expiration date of the original national STCW Certificate, whichever is earlier. STCW Convention '78, as amended, Reg I/4, para 1.1 (under Article X), specifies that a PSCO is authorized to verify that all seafarers serving on board a vessel of the flag State, who are required to be certificated in accordance with the Convention, hold an appropriate certificate or a valid dispensation, or provide documentary proof that an application for an STCW Endorsement Certificate (COE) has been submitted to the Administration following regulation I/10, paragraph 5.

4.3. STCW '78, as amended Reg I/10, para 5, provides that the Administration may, if circumstances require, allow a seafarer to serve for a period not exceeding three (3) months on board a ship entitled to fly its flag while holding an appropriate and valid certificate issued and endorsed as required by another party for use on board that Party's ships but which has not yet been endorsed to render it appropriate for service on board ships entitled to fly the flag of the Administration. In such cases, documentary proof must be readily available to show that an application for an endorsement has been submitted to the Administration.

4.4. For the Verification of Certificates issued by the G-B I.S.R., pls see the below relevant title under par. 7 of this Marine Notice.

5. Responsibilities of Ship Owning/Ship Managing Companies

5.1. Regulation I/14 requires companies (ship owners, ship operators, managers, and bareboat charterers) to ensure that:

.1 each seafarer assigned to any of its ships holds an appropriate certificate in accordance with the provisions of the Convention and as established by the Administration;

.2 its ships are manned in compliance with the applicable safe manning requirements of the Administration;

.3 seafarers assigned to any of its ships have received refresher and updating training as required by the Convention;

.4 documentation and data relevant to all seafarers employed on its ships are maintained and readily accessible, and include, without being limited to, documentation and data on their experience, training, medical fitness, and competency in assigned duties;

.5 seafarers, on being assigned to any of its ships, are familiarized with their specific duties and with all ship arrangements, installations, equipment, procedures, and ship characteristics that are relevant to their routine or emergency duties;

.6 the ship's complement can effectively coordinate their activities in an emergency situation and in performing functions vital to safety, security, and the prevention or mitigation of pollution; and



G-B INTERNATIONAL

INTERNATIONAL SHIPS REGISTRY OF GUINEA-BISSAU

.7 at all times on board its ships there shall be effective oral communication in accordance with Chapter V, regulation 14, paragraphs 3 and 4 of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974 (SOLAS), as amended.

6. Verification of Certificates issued by the G-B I.S.R.

6.1. Digital endorsements issued by the G-B I.S.R. can be verified in either of the following ways:

a. QR Code – Scan the QR Code located in the upper right-hand corner of the digital endorsement with any internet-connected device with a camera and a QR Code reader installed. The QR Code contains a URL that links to the Ship Registry's verification page. This will return a web page confirming the details of the endorsement which should correspond to the certificate available on board the ship.

b. Unique Tracking Number – Visit <https://gbisr.com/certificate-verification/> and enter the Unique Tracking Number (found at the top of the digital endorsement) and the date of issue; this will return a web page confirming the details of the digital endorsement which should correspond to the certificate available on board the ship.

7. Queries

7.1. Any query relating to this Marine Notice should be directed to the G-B I.S.R. Operations Department (ops@gbi-lb.org) and STCW Department (Stcw1@gbi-lb.org, Tel. : +30 210 4537950, +30 210 4537194).

For the Guinea-Bissau International Ships Registry

Authorized Signatory:

Office of the General Ships Registrar

