



Title:	Guidance for the Issuance of Short-Term 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MMN Superseded:	MMN-24-003 and MSN-0003 (15 February 2024 and 9 January 2002)	Revision No.: 1
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1. REFERENCE

- Survey Guidelines under the Harmonized System of Survey and Certification (HSSC), in its latest revision.
- 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 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.



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 shall, upon confirmation of conditions affecting the validity of a Full-Term Certificate that cannot be rectified at the survey port, notify the Administration.
- 5.1.2. If appropriate, the RO shall request authorization from the Administration to downgrade the vessel's Full-Term Certificate to a Short-Term or Extended Certificate.
- 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.



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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.

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:

- a. Suspension or revocation of the vessel's certification.
- b. Imposition of fines or penalties.
- c. Restrictions on the vessel's operations or trading activities.
- d. 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 23 September 2024.



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