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P & I CLUB CORRESPONDENTS

CIRCULAR TO ALL P&I CLUBS

Date: 11 March 2025

Subject: Ship Sanitation Certificates

Dear Sirs,

Ship Sanitary Certificates (SSC) is a very crucial document which serves as proof that the ship is free of clear sources of contagion and may be a requirement for permission of entry into port in some jurisdictions. SSC's are issued by competent health authorities in authorized ports, after inspection.

An Ship Sanitation Control Certificate (SSCC) is issued as an evidence of public health risk, including sources of infection and contamination, was detected on board and the required control measures have been satisfactorily completed.

According to International Health Regulations (hereinafter IHR), an Ship Sanitary Control Exemption Certificate (SSCEC) is issued as evidence that no public risk is found on board and the competent authority is satisfied that the ship is free from infection and contamination including vectors and reservoirs. In this respect, IHR has published list of authorized ports all around the world which are capable to give Ship Sanitation Certificates and extensions.

The Ship Sanitation Certificates are valid for 6 months after the date of issuance and this period may be extended by one month if the inspection or control measures required can not be carried out at the port.

The purpose of the extension is to allow a ship to reach a port at which the inspection and necessary control measures can be performed without necessity to travel with an expired certificate on board. An extension may be given 30 days before the expiry date. However, the certificate can not be extended for longer than 30 days after the expiry date.

Recently, it was understood that on the pre-arrival documents of some vessels or while they are at a Turkish port or straits, they were not complying with above situation and arrived to the port with expired certificates or with several extensions even if they had called convenient ports which are authorized to give new certificates.

This matter is considered as a violation of health regulations by the Harbor Masters for which a penalty is imposed based on the net tonnage of the vessel. The penalty for the year 2025 is calculated as per below formula and the cofactor in the formula increases every year.

TL 17.27 x net tonnage of the vessel

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Head office : Bilezik Sokak No. 4 FINDIKLI, 34427, ISTANBUL/TURKEY

P: (90 212) 252 06 00 (8lines) F: (90 212) 249 44 34 www.vitsan.com.tr vitsan@vitsan.com.tr

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After the penalty imposed, the vessel is detained and not allowed to sail. The penalty to be paid to the local authority's bank account within 15 days from the date of impose; to benefit 25% deduction.

The penalty is appealable and if it is in question, then the fine to be paid to benefit 25% deduction and then the appeal to be made within the time frame of 15 days after the penalty imposed.

In addition to the penalty, until the new certificate is issued, the Harbor Masters may not give permission to the vessels to enter a port under their jurisdiction and there might be delays on the vessel's arrival or departure.

In view of above, we recommend the vessels should check the expiry date of their sanitary certificates regularly and make prompt arrangements and obtain new certificate or extension in line with regulations at an appropriate port before the certificate expires.

Besides the above, the vessels that will pass through the Turkish Straits shall be subject to Sanitary Inspections in the places stated at Turkish Straits Maritime Traffic Regulation in accordance with the 1936 Montreux Convention. For the vessel's transiting Straits and which may come across with the allegation of missing the contact the health officers' boat - It may be recommended that the vessel's crew to preserve the ship's VDR and ECDIS records before they are expired and this has to be made immediately (if not done already) and the rest of the ship's records , log books etc. to be kept properly with the relevant entries therein.

The vessels transiting Turkish Straits must follow the Quebec / yellow flag rules at each passage from the Turkish Straits until the health control completed and penalties can be imposed to the vessels if they do not comply these rules during passage. Likewise, the penalty is calculated based on the net tonnage of the vessel.

Submitted for your kind info.

Please contact us if you have any further queries and if you / your members need our assistance, we are always at your disposal.

Our Emergency phone number is: +90 530 129 12 12

Our general e-mail address is: vitsan@vitsan.com.tr

Best regards,

VİTSAN MÜMESSİLLİK VE MÜŞAVİRLİK AS, İSTANBUL