

DRAFT - DGS Crew Branch Circular of 2024

Subject: Implementation of seafarer Identification System and Renewal process for Bio-metric Seafarer's Identity Documents (BSID) - reg.

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1. The implementation of universal identification system for seafarers was introduced through the introduction of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention C-108 on Seafarers' Identity Document 1958, which came into force on 19.02.1961. India ratified this convention and promulgated Merchant Shipping (Continuous Discharge Certificate) Rules 1993 and subsequently suppressed these rules and issued Merchant Shipping (Continuous Discharge Certificate-cum-Seafarer's Identity Document) Rules, 2001 and continued issuing Continuous Discharge Certificate (CDC) cum Seafarers' Identity Document (SID) to their seafarers under these rules.

2. Whereas, these said CDC document were typically issued in the form of a booklet, which serves as an official identification, record of sea service and certification for seafarers and thereby ensuring compliance with international standards and regulations regarding seafarer documentation and identifications.

3. Whereas, ILO introduced convention C185 - Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention (Revised), 2003, as amended which came into force from 09.02.2005. India ratified C185 on 09.10.2015 hence it resulted in automatic denunciation of the convention C-108 on Seafarers' Identity Document 1958 on 08.10.2016.

4. Whereas, Merchant Shipping (Seafarer's Bio-metric Identity Document) Rules, 2016 were notified on 11.4.2016 and systems for the issuance of SIDs to Indian seafarers were streamlined and launched on 05.04.2019 via MS Notice No. 02 of 2019 for issuance of separate chip-based cards to seafarers, thereby differentiating between CDCs and SIDs with the advent of BSID.

5. Whereas, as per the introduction of ILO convention C185 regulations, introduced the issuance of separate chip-based cards known as Bio-metric Seafarer's Identity Documents (BSID) and this differentiates the Continuous Discharge Certificates (CDCs) from the SIDs, thereby enhancing the identification process by BSID within the maritime sector.

6. Whereas, with the enactment of the Merchant Shipping (Continuous Discharge Certificate) Rules, 2017, there has been an omission of the term "Seafarer's Identity Document."

Consequently, CDC booklets issued under these rules display the inscription "Continuous Discharge Certificate only."

6. This Directorate has received complaints that Indian seafarers issued with CDCs before 2017, bearing the inscription "Continuous Discharge Certificate-cum-Seafarer's Identity Document" are facing validation issues with respect to SID compliance.

7. The Directorate had subsequent consultations with stakeholders and has decided to streamline these complexities in the following manner:

7.1 The CDCs issued with the aforementioned inscription as "Continuous Discharge Certificate-cum-Seafarer's Identity Document " will now be treated solely as CDC booklets for displaying seafarers' sea service records and voyage details etc.

7.2 It is imperative that seafarers ensure correct entries in their CDC's and obtain the Master's signatures correctly regarding the date of signing off from the vessel, which should be detailed in column 2 of the CDC booklet entries.

7.3 Furthermore, in accordance with MS Notice 2 of 2019 dated 9.4.2019, which launched Biometric Seafarer's Identity Documents (BSID) for Indian seafarers as per MS (BSID) Rules 2016, it is further clarified that the BSID is valid for 10 years, with renewal required to be carried out after the first 5 years.

7.4 Hence, the BSID issued in 2019 will need to renewed in first five years (i.e., year 2024). The renewal process for BSID issued in 2019 will commence in 2024 and seafarers may apply for renewal within six (06) months prior to the expiry of their BSIDs.

7.5 Seafarers are urged to strictly adhere to the renewal instructions as detailed in BSID online portal as available in the following link:

<https://www.dgshippingbsid.in/BSIDGuidelines.jsp>

and approach the nearest Shipping Master Office (SMO) / BSID center to ensure compliance and uninterrupted validity of their BSID.

7.6 Irrespective of the Shipping Master office where the BSID was issued earlier, seafarers are free to choose any approved locations they wish to renew their BSID as per their choice and convenience.

8. This is issued with the approval of Director General of Shipping.

(Capt. Daniel Joseph)
Dy. Director General of Shipping (Crew)

To

1. All stakeholders (owners / employers / recruiters / seafarers union etc.) through DGS website
2. All other non-members Shipping Companies to any associations
3. Government Shipping Office, Mumbai / Kolkata / Chennai
4. Principal Officers, Mercantile Marine Departments.
5. Hindi Cell for Translation.
6. E-Gov Cell
7. Computer Cell for uploading