

For comments -- all the stakeholders are requested to send an email to danieljohn-dgs@gov.in; dharmendra.kr.dgs@gov.in; & crews-dgs@nic.in; on or before 25.02.2025.

F-NO. 23-59/1/2024-CREW - DGS

Date: xx.xx.2025

DGS Crew Branch Circular No. XX of 2025

Whereas, the implementation of universal identification system for seafarers was introduced through the introduction of the International Labour Organization (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) Rules, 2001 and continued issuing Continuous Discharge Certificate (CDC) cum Seafarers' Identity Document (SID) to its seafarers under said rules.

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

3. Whereas, India has ratified the Convention No 185 of the International Labour Organization (ILO) regarding Seafarer's Identity Documents (SID) and hence, it resulted in automatic denunciation of the convention C-108 on Seafarers Identity Document 1958 on 08.10.2016

4. Whereas, the Merchant Shipping (Seafarer's Biometric Identity Document) Rules, 2016 have been notified on 11.04 2016 and in pursuance thereof, issuance of Biometric Seafarer's Identity Document (BSID) has been launched with effect from 05.04.2019 to Indian seafarers' vide Merchant Shipping Notice No. 02 of 2019 (F No. CR/SID-CDAC (1)/14/IV) dated 09.04.2019)

5. Whereas, with the introduction of ILO Convention C-185 regulations, the issuance of separate chip-based cards known as Biometric Seafarers' Identity Document (BSID) commenced, thereby enhancing the identification process by Biometric Seafarers' Identity Document (BSID) within the maritime sector.

6. Whereas, with the promulgation of Merchant Shipping (Continuous Discharge Certificate) Rules, 2017, the term 'Seafarers' Identity Document' is omitted from Continuous Discharge Certificate (CDCs)

7. Whereas, the maximum validity of SID Document under Rule 7 of Merchant Shipping (Seafarer's Biometric Identity Document) Rules, 2016 shall be for a period of ten (10) years, subject to renewal after the first five (05) years.

8. Further, sub-rule 1 of Rule 8 of Merchant Shipping (Seafarer's Biometric Identity Document) Rules, 2016 states "*SID may be renewed after first five (05) years of its issuance on a request from the holder for a further period up to ten (10) years at a time*".

9. Whereas, the Directorate is in receipt of various queries suggestions from various seafarers, shipping companies / RPS agency and stakeholders referring to Para 6 of Article 3 of ILO Convention No. 185 which states "*The maximum validity of a seafarers' identity document shall be determined in accordance with the laws and regulations of the issuing State and shall in no case exceed ten years subject to renewal after the first five (05) years.*"

10. Whereas, Directorate sought suggestions of all concerned stakeholders vide Draft Circular No. 23-MISC/26/2024-CREW-DGS dated 21.05.2024 and basis feedback received from various stakeholders, following is hereby decided to address the ambiguity.

10.1 *The CDCs issued with the inscription Continuous Discharge Certificate (CDC) cum Seafarers' Identity Document (SID)' under the erstwhile Merchant Shipping (Continuous Discharge Certificate) Rules, 2001 shall now be treated solely as 'Continuous Discharge Certificate (CDC)' for displaying / recording of sea service records and voyage details, etc.*

10.2 Further, *the BSID Document, i.e., chip-based cards being issued under Merchant Shipping (Seafarer's Biometric Identity Document) Rules, 2016 are valid for ten (10) years, with renewal required to be carried out after the first five (05) years. Hence, the BSID issued in the year 2019 will not remain due for renewal in first five (05) years (i.e., till the year 2024). The renewal process for BSID issued in 2019 shall commence post completion of five (05) years of issuance and the concern seafarers may apply for renewal within six (06) months prior to the expiry of their BSIDs.*

10.3 *The seafarer may apply for Renewal of their BSIDs to any Shipping Master Office (SMOs) of their choice irrespective of the SMO from which BSID was initially issued to them.*

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

(Capt. (Dr.) Daniel J Joseph)
Dy Director General of Shipping