

**For comments: All the stakeholders are requested to send an email to [danieljohn-dgs@gov.in](mailto:danieljohn-dgs@gov.in); [nishant.d-dgs@gov.in](mailto:nishant.d-dgs@gov.in); & [crews-dgs@nic.in](mailto:crews-dgs@nic.in); on or before 26.02.2025.**

**File No. 23-POL/3/2024-CREW-DGS (C. No. 30774)**

**Date: xx.xx.2025**

**DGS Circular No. XX of 2025**

**Subject: Issues faced by Shipping / RPS Companies while extending contractual Article of Agreement (AoA) - reg.**

1. Whereas, the Merchant Shipping (Recruitment & Placement of Seafarers) Rules, 2016, promulgated by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Government of India (GoI) on 14.02.2016, stipulates under Section 5(c) that the Recruitment and Placement Services (RPS) companies must ensure that the seafarers recruited or placed by them are fully apprised of their rights and obligations under their respective employment agreements. These agreements must be made available for scrutiny both prior to signing on and post-signing off, with duly signed copies mandatorily provided to the seafarers.
2. Whereas, Section 100 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958 mandates that the Master of an Indian Ships, except a home-trade vessel of less than 200 gross tons, must execute an agreement (hereinafter referred to as the "Agreement with the Crew") in accordance with the Act with every seafarer engaged as a crew member from any Indian port.
3. Whereas, as per the paragraphs 14 to 17 of DGS Circular No. 02 of 2002, the Master is obligated to maintain three copies of the Article of Agreement always onboard the vessel.
4. Whereas, the Directorate General of Shipping (DGS) has been receiving consistent representations from Indian Ship Owners and RPS Companies, highlighting challenges faced by them when extending the contractual period of Articles of Agreement (AoA) for seafarers on Indian-flagged vessels. Specifically, during inspections by onboard surveyors, employers or their representatives are often instructed to close the existing Article of Agreement (AoA) and initiate a fresh one for the concerned seafarer.
5. Whereas, an updated copy of the extended Article of Agreement (AoA) is required to be maintained onboard the vessel and this process significantly increases the administrative burden on Indian Ship Owners & RPS Companies, necessitating extensive modifications and reissuance of agreements.
6. Whereas, this Directorate has reviewed the representations submitted by the Indian Maritime Industry. However, it has been indicated that the necessary modifications to extend the Article of Agreement (AoA) within the current E-Governance System is currently not applicable. Consequently, the necessary amendments in the Article of Agreement (AoA) will be incorporated into the new E-Governance System.

7. Furthermore, it is pertinent to note that if the employer, shipowner, or RPS agency, along with the seafarer mutually agrees to extend the contract period but does not exceed more than eleven (11) months, there is no explicit requirement to terminate the existing Article of Agreement. Instead, the employer, shipowner, or RPS agency must ensure that an extended letter for Article of Agreement is maintained onboard the vessel for compliance and inspection purposes.

8. This issues with the approval of Director General of Shipping.

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