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PRESS RELEASE

TOKYO MOU REVISING THE GUIDANCE FOR DEALING WITH IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC OF THE COVID-19

For dealing with the impact of the outbreak of COVID-19 in a pragmatic and harmonized approach in the region, Tokyo MOU adopted the relevant guidance on 12 March 2020 for port State Authorities to apply pragmatic relaxation on requests for extending periods of service onboard of seafarers, delaying periods for surveys, inspections and audits on a case-by-case basis. In accordance with the guidance, port State Authorities would accept the period of grace for delaying surveys, inspections or audits extended by flag State Administration and/or RO up to three months from the middle of January 2020 (starting of the outbreak of COVID-19). Taking into account that serious interruptions to the shipping industry become long-lasting as the consequence of the COVID-19 situation changed from epidemic into the world pandemic, Tokyo MOU reviewed and revised the relevant guidance in order to cope with the uncertain circumstances.

Noting that no end sign of the situation can be expected at the moment, the guidance is revised to allow port State Authorities to apply the pragmatic relaxation for an appropriate grace period for delaying periods for surveys, inspections and audits specific to COVID-19 given to ship by the flag State Administration and/or RO. The revised guidance will be effective from 15 April 2020.

The guidance may be further reviewed upon any future initiatives IMO/ILO or developments of the situation.

10 April 2020

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Notes to editors:

* The Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control in the Asia-Pacific Region, known as the Tokyo MOU, was signed among eighteen maritime Authorities in the region on 1 December 1993 and came into operation on 1 April 1994. At present, Tokyo MOU consists of 21 member Authorities: Australia, Canada, Chile, China, Fiji, Hong Kong (China), Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Marshall Islands, New Zealand, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Russian Federation, Singapore, Thailand, Vanuatu and Viet Nam. Mexico adheres to the Tokyo MOU as a co-operating member Authority. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Macao (China), Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, the United States Coast Guard, the International Maritime Organization, the International Labour Organization and the Secretariats of the Paris, the Indian Ocean, the Black Sea, the Riyadh, the Caribbean and the Abuja Memoranda of Understanding on Port State Control and the Viña del Mar Agreement are associated with the Tokyo MOU as observers.

The Secretariat of the Memorandum is located in Tokyo, Japan. The PSC database system, the Asia-Pacific Computerized Information System (APCIS), was established. The APCIS center is located in Moscow, under the auspices of the Ministry of Transport of the Russian Federation.

Port State Control (PSC) is a check on visiting foreign ships to verify their compliance with international rules on safety, security, marine environment protection and seafarers living and working conditions. It is a means of enforcing compliance in cases where the owner and flag State have failed in their responsibility to implement or ensure compliance. The port State can require defects to be put right, and detain the ship for this purpose if necessary. It is therefore also a port State's defense against visiting substandard shipping and PSC is the second defense for ensuring safety, security, marine environment protection and seafarers living and working conditions.