

M.S. Notice 03 of 2003

No. 43(7)CR/2000-VI.

Date : January 29, 2003

Sub: Removal of endorsement on CDCs - Limiting of age to 60 years

1. The seafarers and the shipping companies have represented that the restriction of validity of the Continuous Discharge Certificate-cum-Seafarers Identity Document (CDC) to 60 years of age by the Shipping Masters has resulted in seafarers losing employment opportunities.

2. On examination of the relevant rules it is noticed that M S (CDC) Rules, 2001 do not stipulate maximum age upto which the seafarer can be in possession of CDC. Similarly, Merchant Shipping (Standards of Training Certification and Watch keeping for Seafarers) Rules, 1998 also does not place any restriction in this regard. However, Seamen's Employment Office Order No. 26 dated 3.11.1983 prescribed the retirement age of the person from seafaring profession at 60 yrs. This rule also provided discretion to the Director, Seamen's Employment Office, to permit employment of seamen over 60 years of age, but not exceeding 65, provided the shipowner accepted the engagement of the seaman and the prescribed medical authority declared him 'Fit', prior to engagement. This rule was applicable during the period when all seamen were employed through Rosters maintained by the Seamen's Employment Offices (SEO). From September 1997 this procedure has been dis-continued and shipping companies could employ any qualified seafarer from the open market and no constraints were placed by the administration through SEOs. The DGS Order No. 1 of 2001 dated 27.03.2001 laid down specific guidelines in this regard and as a result the SEO Order 26 is no longer applicable.

3. **Vide circular No.8-NT(1)/2000 dated 2.11.2002, Indian Officer serving on Indian Ships will not be required to obtain age dispensation till the age of 65 yrs. This circular also provides for considering cases beyond the age of 65, with prior approval of the designated authorities. Therefore, this circular permits a seafarer to be employed beyond the age of 65 yrs.**

4. Subsequent to liberalization, the employment of the seafarer is governed by the requirement of a shipowner and the eligibility of the seafarer, subject to medical fitness. The CDC is an identification document for the seafarer. Any limitations placed by the Shipping Master, restricting the validity of CDC upto the age of 60 yrs, is not in consonance with the M S (CDC) Rules, and also hampers the job prospects of the seafarers.

5. Accordingly, Shipping Masters are hereby directed to cancel the endorsement placed in the CDCs whereby the validity of the CDC has been restricted to 60 yrs. of age.

This issues with the approval of the Director-General of Shipping and Secretary to the Govt. of India.

Sd/-
(Neera Malhotra)
Dy. Director General of Shipping