



Merchant Shipping Directorate



## EXTENSION OF SEA SERVICE BEYOND THE SEAFARER EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT PERIOD

### *Merchant Shipping Notice 166*

*Notice to Shipowners, Ship Operators, Managers, Masters, Owners' Representatives and Recognised Organisations*

The Directorate draws the attention of all concerned that, in addition to the information found in Merchant Shipping Notice 158 in relation to the extension of sea service beyond the seafarer employment agreement period due to the extreme circumstances imposed by the COVID-19 restrictions, the following is to be noted:

- 1) seafarers on Malta registered ships are to be repatriated by the end of the validity of the Seafarers' Employment Agreement (SEA);
- 2) where repatriation is not possible by the end of the validity of the SEA, SEAs may be extended up to a maximum total of 11 months, in line with MLC provisions and at least under the same terms and conditions of the original agreement, provided there is a signed agreement between the shipowner and the seafarer;
- 3) when applying to the flag for any extensions beyond 11 months, shipowners are to provide detailed reasons/justification for such a request backed by documented evidence as to why they are not able to repatriate crew and their defined plan to repatriate the crew at the very first opportunity but in any case not later than 14 months. This application is to be submitted prior to the end of the 11 month period;
- 4) evidence of reasons/justification, repatriation plan, extended SEAs, and acceptance by this Administration, are to be kept available on board for verification and inspection purposes.

The attention and cooperation of all concerned is being solicited in order to ensure the uninterrupted operations of Maltese ships.

All requests for extensions are to be addressed to [mlc.tm@transport.gov.mt](mailto:mlc.tm@transport.gov.mt).

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