



Merchant Shipping Directorate



USE OF ELECTRONIC CERTIFICATES ISSUED BY THE MALTA SHIP REGISTRY

Merchant Shipping Notice 193

*Notice to Ship-owners, Ship Operators, Managers, Masters,
Owners' Representatives and Recognized Organizations*

The Directorate would like to draw the attention of all concerned to Circular FAL.5/Circ.39/Rev.2 – Guidelines for the Use of Electronic Certificates, approved during the 40th session of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Facilitation Committee. The Guidelines are designed to facilitate the use and acceptance of electronic certificates with the intention of alleviating the administrative burden caused, amongst other factors, by the reliance on traditional paper certificates.

In view of the above, the Malta Ship Registry will commence the issuance of electronic certificates as of **01/06/25**.

An electronic certificate shall be considered as an original certificate for the purposes of the Merchant Shipping Act and shall therefore be used for the lawful navigation of a ship. This transition is part of the Malta Ship Registry's commitment to improving administrative efficiency, enhancing sustainability, and supporting the maritime industry's shift towards digital solutions. It is to be noted that all original hardcopy certificates issued by this Administration prior to the above indicated date are to remain valid until their date of expiry and shall be carried onboard.

Features of Electronic Certificates

All electronic certificates issued to Maltese-registered ships will comply with the standards outlined in FAL.5/Circ.39/Rev.2 and will include the following security features:

1. Validity and consistency with the format and content required by the relevant international convention;
2. Protection from edits, modifications, or revisions;
3. A unique tracking number for verification purposes;
4. Reliable and secure verification through a continuously accessible digital platform; and
5. A printable and visible symbol confirming the source of issuance.

Format and Verification Process

From the effective date, the Malta Ship Registry will issue certificates in electronic PDF format, which will be transmitted to the electronic address indicated by the applicant for onward delivery to Masters and Ship Managers. Each certificate will contain:

- A QR code, in lieu of a handwritten signature from the Registrar;

Malta Transport Centre
Hal Lija LJA 2021, Malta

Tel: +356 2125 0360
Email: mershipmalta.tm@transport.gov.mt



Merchant Shipping Directorate
ISO 9001:2015 certified



- The name of the authorised officer who authenticated the certificate.

The QR code will serve as the sole verification method confirming that the document has been issued by the Malta Flag Administration.

Verification of a certificate's authenticity may be carried out as follows:

- Online verification: By scanning the QR code with a standard smartphone connected to the internet, allowing instant verification without the need for third-party applications.
- Offline verification: By using the DigSig Authenticator app, which enables access to certificate details even when no internet connection is available.

The QR code will be in the form of an ISO/IEC 20248 DigSig which is a Digital Signature and compacted data that can be used to verify the authenticity and integrity of documents.

Validity and Compliance

All electronic statutory certificates issued by the Recognised Organizations (ROs) on behalf of the Malta Ship Registry, in accordance with FAL.5/Circ.39/Rev.2, shall be recognized as valid under all applicable international instruments. In this context, specific reference is made to [MS Notice 139](#) regarding the use of electronic certificates. ROs issuing statutory certificates for vessels under the Malta Flag have been encouraged and authorized to enhance their capabilities to provide electronic versions of these certificates, thereby promoting improved administrative and operational efficiencies.

Stakeholders Engagement

Shipowners, operators, managers, and relevant stakeholders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the electronic certification process. A list of certificates which shall be issued electronically as of the indicated date, is being annexed to this Notice. Further information is also available at maltashipregistry.gov.mt

This transition represents a significant step forward in reducing administrative burdens on shipowners, port State control officials, and crews, while ensuring a more secure, efficient, and environmentally sustainable certification framework.

It is recommended that a copy of this MS Notice is retained on board and be made available to Port State Control officers and other interested third parties.

Merchant Shipping Directorate

12 May 2025



Annex I – List of Certificates to be issued electronically as of 01/06/2025

- Provisional Certificate of Malta Registry
- Provisional Certificate of Malta (Bareboat Charter) Registry
- Extension of Provisional Certificate of Malta Registry
- Extension of Provisional Certificate of Malta (Bareboat Charter) Registry
- Certificate of Malta Registry
- Certificate of Malta (Bareboat Charter) Registry
- Renewal of Certificate of Malta Registry
- Renewal of Certificate of Malta (Bareboat Charter) Registry
- Certificate of Insurance or other Financial Security in respect of Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage issued in accordance with the provisions of Article VII of the International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage, 1992.
- Certificate of Insurance or other Financial Security in respect of Civil Liability for Bunker Oil Pollution Damage issued in accordance with the Provisions of Article 7 of the International Convention on Civil Liability for Bunker Oil Pollution Damage, 2001.
- Certificate of insurance or other financial security in respect of liability for the removal of wrecks Issued in accordance with the provisions of article 12 of the Nairobi International Convention on the Removal of Wrecks, 2007.
- Certificate of Insurance or other Financial Security in respect of Liability for the Death of and Personal Injury to Passengers Issued in accordance with the provisions of Regulation (EC) No. 392/2009 of 23 April 2009 on the liability of carriers of passengers by sea in the event of accidents.
- Declaration of Maritime Labour Compliance – Part I & II issued under the provisions of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006
- Continuous Synopsis Record (ISPS-Code, Chapter XI-I, Regulation 5)
- Provisional Global Maritime Distress and Safety System Ship Station Licence



- Global Maritime Distress and Safety System Ship Station Licence
- Provisional Ship Station Licence – Individual
- Ship Station Licence – Individual
- Minimum Safe Manning Certificate issued in compliance with the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea 1974 Chapter V Regulation 14(2), and the Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour Convention) Rules
- Minimum Safe Manning Certificate issued in compliance with the Merchant Shipping (Certification of Commercial Yachts and Commercial Cruising Vessels) Regulations, 2006