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Circular Letter No.5019
20 May 2025

To: All IMO Members
Intergovernmental organizations
Non-governmental organizations in consultative status

Subject: **Communication from the Kingdom of the Netherlands**

The Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands has sent the attached communication, dated 6 May 2025, with the request that it be circulated by the Organization.



> Return address Postbus 20901 2500 EX Den Haag

International Maritime Organization
Secretary General
Attn. His Excellency Mr. Arsenio Dominguez Velasco
4 Albert Embankment
SE1 7SR London United Kingdom

**DG Luchtvaart en
Maritieme Zaken**
Dir. Maritieme Zaken
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Contact
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Date 6 May 2025
Subject Notification on fraudulent activities

Dear Mr. Secretary General,

On behalf of the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, I would like to inform you about fraudulent activities that have been detected, specifically the issuance of fraudulent certificates and fraudulent applications for seaman's books.

To start with, for some time we are confronted with the issuance of fraudulent certificates such as Certificates of Registry and Certificates of Competencies (CoCs) on behalf of Sint Maarten. Sint Maarten is an independent country within the Kingdom of the Netherlands, and has no international flag registry. Only the Netherlands and Curaçao run an international flag registry within the Kingdom.

The government of Sint Maarten does not issue any Certificate of Competency, seaman's book or ships certificates for motor vessels over 500 GT, nor did Sint Maarten give authorization to any recognized organization or persons to work on their behalf. Sint Maarten does issue several type of ships certificates which are restricted to the Caribbean trading area only.

We are working diligently to take the necessary steps to stop these types of actions from unauthorized persons pretending to be from Sint Maarten or working on their behalf. At this time, Sint Maarten is aware of certain websites imposing to be issuing formal Sint Maarten flag State certificates:

<http://www.msta-registry.com/> and <https://ims-registry.org/vessel-registration/>

These websites are fake websites and issue fraudulent Sint Maarten certificates. Many individuals have invested in certificates via these websites and Sint Maarten has continuously received many inquiries regarding the validity of these documents. *For further inquiries, please contact Sint Maarten Maritime Administration: maritimesxm@sintmaartengov.org*

Secondly, there have been found several cases of fraudulent applications for seaman's book in the Netherlands in the past months. We have identified two different types of fraudulent activities:

1. Fraudulent parties using the logo and signatures of other companies. The company whose logo was used had nothing to do with these applications.
2. Fraudulent parties using non-existing or fictive shipping names in applications for seaman's books.

Date
13 March 2025

At this moment, there is a criminal investigation carried out by the Intelligence and Investigation Services (IOD), which is part of the Dutch Inspectorate (ILT), and therefore we are not able to report any specific information or details of companies concerned. Nevertheless, we feel obliged to inform the International Maritime Organization and its Member States about these fraudulent applications, and possible fraudulent seaman's books that are circulating due to this. We noticed that fraudulent applications from the identified fraudulent companies have stopped in the Netherlands since the investigation has been going on. We suspect however that these processes may have moved to other countries, allowing these criminal activities to continue.

As we all know, the issuance of fraudulent certificates is a serious problem that affects the safety of seafarers and ships. In order to protect seafarers from substandard ships, it is important to strictly address and govern the issuance of seafarer qualifications. Our advice is to always verify the presented certificates through the appropriate official channels.

It would be highly appreciated if you could bring this letter to the attention of all IMO Member States, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations in consultative status by means of a circular letter.

Yours sincerely,



Michiel van Kruiningen
Director of Maritime Affairs
