
BMI Circular 2022/001/Rev.1

Ukrainian seafarers

Date: 12/06/2023

This is a revised version of the BMI Circular 2020/002.

To whom it may concern,

This BMI Circular applies to all Belgian flagged ships, with the exception of fishing vessels, and is addressed to all parties responsible for the manning of Belgian flagged ships.

The purpose of this circular is to provide support and detailed guidance in relation to the extension of the service of Ukrainian seafarers on board Belgian flagged vessels as a result of the Russian attack on Ukraine. The Belgian Maritime Inspectorate (BMI) considers it is necessary to be flexible in these circumstances, taking into account the difficulties encountered in the renewal of their certificates.

Certification of Ukrainian seafarers

The Russian attack on Ukraine has created major challenges for Ukrainian seafarers. One of these challenges is the issue of personal certificates and identity certificates. The Ukrainian authorities have therefore decided to grant a general extension of the validity of Ukrainian certificates issued to seafarers with an original expiry date after 1 March 2020.

The Ukrainian authorities have now extended the validity of these certificates and identity documents until **31 December 2023**. Reference is made to IMO Circular Letter No.4232/Add.19.

A. STCW certificates

1. Recognition (endorsement) of Certificate of Competency or a Certificate of Proficiency (tankers)

Ukrainian authorities consider the Ukrainian certificates and identity documents issued to seafarers with an original date of expiry after 1 March 2020, as valid until **31 December 2023**.

If the national Certificate of Competency (CoC) or Certificate of Proficiency (CoP) of a Ukrainian seafarer is still valid, an application for a Belgian endorsement (recognition) can be submitted according to the normal procedure at CSA (Certification of Seafarers Antwerp - STCW).

Endorsements of Ukrainian seafarers which expire during a sea voyage shall be regarded as valid until the moment of signing off, with the latest application date being **31 December 2023**.

In case the national CoC or CoP has expired, but an extension has been granted by the national maritime authority on an individual or a general basis, an application for a Belgian endorsement (recognition) can be submitted to CSA (Certification of Seafarers Antwerp - STCW).

As the Ukrainian authorities have extended the validity of these certificates and identity documents until **31 December 2023**, a Ukrainian seafarer shall automatically be issued with a Certificate of Receipt of Application (CRA) valid for 3 months or less if the extension is less than 3 months. The Certificate of Receipt of Application may be renewed taking into account the extension granted by Ukraine.

Recognitions can be applied for online via STCW-on-WEB (link [in Dutch](#) – [in French](#)).

Certification of Seafarers Antwerp - STCW (CSA) is to be contacted:

- Through mail: <mailto:STCW95@mobiliteit.fgov.be>,

- By phone during office hours: +32 3 286 68 90.

2. Certificates of Proficiency which do not need recognition

Certificates of Proficiency issued by the Ukrainian administration, other than those issued under the provisions of STCW Regulations V/1, will remain valid for service on board Belgian ships.

B. Medical certificates

Medical certificates must be issued by doctors recognised by the Belgian maritime administration or recognised by the maritime administration of another a Member State of the European Union or of a Member State of the European Economic Area.

The Belgian Maritime Inspection Regulation as well as the Maritime Labour Convention allow in **exceptional circumstances** a seafarer whose certificate of medical fitness for seafarers expires during a voyage in a place where it is not possible to obtain a certificate of medical fitness accepted for work on a Belgian ship, to continue working until the next port of call where the crew member can obtain a certificate of medical fitness issued by a doctor who is recognised by the Belgian maritime administration or by the maritime administration of a Member State of the European Union or by the maritime administration of a Member State of the European Economic Area.
