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PRESS RELEASE

TOKYO MOU LAUNCHED GUIDANCE ON REMOTE PSC INSPECTION

The COVID-19 pandemic had caused enormous impact on Tokyo MOU activities in various aspects, including a notable decrease of the number of inspections due to restrictions of ship-shore interaction. Recognizing the necessity and importance of maintaining PSC activities under the pandemic circumstance, the Port State Control Committee of the Tokyo MOU at its 31st meeting (virtual) decided to launch remote PSC inspections as a practical alternative in the interim, where and when a normal physical PSC inspection not feasible. Although a remote PSC inspection may not be as fully effective as a physical PSC inspection, it would be the preferred option which could minimize the risk for both PSCOs and crew onboard. In this context, a guidance on remote PSC inspection has been developed and adopted in order to facilitate member Authorities and PSCOs to carry out remote PSC inspections in the effective and harmonized manner.

Remote PSC inspection scheme will be implemented in accordance with the following guiding principles and procedures:

Selection of a ship for a remote PSC inspection is at the discretion of the port State Authority in accordance with the existing inspection regime but not decided on requesting basis from the ship's side. It would not be mandated for a ship to receive a remote PSC inspection. A remote PSC inspection would be carried out upon mutual agreement between the port State Authority and the ship.

Remote PSC inspections would be applied only for initial inspection in principle. However, it does not preclude that a port State Authority may conduct more detailed inspection and/or order detention during the remote PSC inspection in accordance with their national legislation, the technical capabilities of the ship and the port concerned and other relevant circumstances.

A ship would not be subject a repeated/consecutive remote PSC inspection generally. Record/report of remote PSC inspection would be distinguished from reports of normal physical inspection in the APCIS database.

Remote PSC inspection will be launched as from 1 April 2021.

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Notes to editors:

* The Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control in the Asia-Pacific Region, known as the Tokyo MOU, was signed among eighteen maritime Authorities in the region on 1 December 1993 and came into operation on 1 April 1994. At present, Tokyo MOU consists of 21 member Authorities: Australia, Canada, Chile, China, Fiji, Hong Kong (China), Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Marshall Islands, New Zealand, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Russian Federation, Singapore, Thailand, Vanuatu and Viet Nam. Mexico adheres to the Tokyo MOU as a co-operating member Authority. Cambodia, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Macao (China), Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, the United States Coast Guard, the International Maritime Organization, the International Labour Organization and the Secretariats of the Paris, the Indian Ocean, the Black Sea, the Riyadh, the Caribbean and the Abuja Memoranda of Understanding on Port State Control and the Viña del Mar Agreement are associated with the Tokyo MOU as observers.

The Secretariat of the Memorandum is located in Tokyo, Japan. The PSC database system, the Asia-Pacific Computerized Information System (APCIS), was established. The APCIS center is located in Moscow, under the auspices of the Ministry of Transport of the Russian Federation.

Port State Control (PSC) is a check on visiting foreign ships to verify their compliance with international rules on safety, security, marine environment protection and seafarers living and working conditions. It is a means of enforcing compliance in cases where the owner and flag State have failed in their responsibility to implement or ensure compliance. The port State can require defects to be put right, and detain the ship for this purpose if necessary. It is therefore also a port State's defense against visiting substandard shipping and PSC is the second defense for ensuring safety, security, marine environment protection and seafarers living and working conditions.