



TUVALU SHIP REGISTRY

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MARINE CIRCULAR

MC-5/2016/1

08/2026

FOR: Ship Owners, Ship Managers, Ship Operators, Ship Masters, Ship Officers, Classification Societies, Port State Control Officers

SUBJECT: IMPLEMENTATION OF ELECTRONIC CERTIFICATES FOR VESSELS

DEFINITIONS:

The following abbreviations stand for:

- “IMO” – International Maritime Organization
- “ISM” – International Safety Management Code
- “PSC” – Port State Control
- “RO” – Recognized Organization authorized by the Administration in accordance with the IMO Code for Recognized Organizations (RO Code), as amended.

The following terms shall mean:

- “Administration” – Tuvalu Ship Registry
- “Electronic Certificate” – a certificate issued in an electronic format established or approved by the Administration to ensure viewing compatibility for all intended verifiers.
- “Electronic Signature” – data in electronic form which is attached to, embedded in, or logically associated with other electronic data to serve as a method of authentication of the issuer and the contents of the electronic data.
- “Unique Certificate Number” – a string of numbers, letters or symbols used as an identifier to distinguish an electronic certificate issued by, or under the authority of, the Administration from any other electronic certificate issued by, or under the authority of, the Administration
- “Verification” – a reliable, secure and continuously available process to confirm the authenticity and validity of an electronic certificate using the unique certificate number and other data contained in, or embedded in, the electronic certificate.

PURPOSE:

This Circular implements the Guidelines contained in IMO Circular FAL-LEG-MEPC-MSC.1/Circ.1 and sets out the Administration’s requirements for the issuance, acceptance, verification, security and shipboard control of electronic certificates.

IMO Circular FAL-LEG-MEPC-MSC.1/Circ.1 revokes and replaces FAL.5/Circ.39/Rev.2 and MSC.1/Circ.1665.

For electronic certificates issued by the Administration to seafarers, please refer to Reference (a) below.

REFERENCES:

- (a) Tuvalu Marine Circular MC-3/2015/1 – Electronic Certificates of Endorsement
- (b) IMO Circular FAL-LEG-MEPC-MSC.1/Circ.1 – Joint Guidelines for the Use of Electronic Certificates

APPLICATION:

This marine circular applies to certificates issued by the Administration, or by ROs duly authorized to issue statutory certificates on behalf of the Administration, to Tuvalu flagged vessels.

CONTENTS:

The implementation of electronic certificates aims to reduce the administrative burden on other Administrations, PSC officers, seafarers etc. caused by the reliance of traditional paper certificates, thereby minimising delays to the operations of Tuvalu flagged vessels and creating a greener environment.

1. All electronic certificates issued by this Administration incorporates the applicable features specified in IMO Circular FAL-LEG-MEPC-MS.C.1/Circ.1.
2. The Administration shall ensure that its electronic certificate issuance and verification systems incorporate appropriate measures to protect against unauthorized alteration, fraud and security breaches, and to maintain the availability and integrity of electronic certificate data.
3. Original hardcopy certificates previously issued by this Administration before 01 January 2019 shall remain valid and shall continue to be carried on board until such time they are replaced by electronic certificates.
4. To verify the registration of vessels holding original hardcopy certificates, please key in the vessel's Official Number in the online verification system at <https://tvship.com/verifyreg>
5. To verify individual original hardcopy certificates, please email a copy of the certificate to support@tvship.com or info@tvship.com to request for authentication.
6. ROs authorized by the Administration to issue statutory certificates on its behalf may issue such certificates electronically, provided that the procedures and systems for their issuance, storage, endorsement, verification and security comply with IMO Circular FAL-LEG-MEPC-MS.C.1/Circ.1.
7. Shipowners, operators and shipboard personnel shall ensure that electronic certificates are readily accessible on board and are controlled through the Safety Management System in accordance with section 11 of the ISM Code, including appropriate arrangements for retrieval, protection and availability.
8. A copy of this Marine Circular shall be kept on board to facilitate the acceptance of electronic certificates by other relevant authorities.
9. Methods for verification of Electronic Certificates issued by the Administration:
 - 9.1. Entering the Unique Certificate Number in the online verification system at <https://tvship.com/verifyreg>; or
 - 9.2. Scanning the Quick Response (QR) Code found on the electronic certificate shall provide access to the electronic certificate and enable confirmation of its authenticity and validity.

WARNING: Users shall exercise caution when verifying electronic certificates. A QR Code on a certificate does not, by itself, establish the authenticity of the certificate. For certificates issued by the Administration, users shall verify that any website accessed through a QR Code uses the official tvship.com domain. Where there is any doubt as to the authenticity of a certificate or verification website, confirmation shall be obtained directly from the Administration.

Yours sincerely,

Deputy Registrar
Tuvalu Ship Registry