



Marine Safety Information Bulletin

Commandant
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International Health Regulations: Ship Sanitation Control Certificate/Ship Sanitation Control Exemption Certificate

The USCG has received multiple inquiries from vessel owners and operators on how to obtain a Ship Sanitation Control Certificate (SSCC) and/or a Ship Sanitation Control Exemption Certificate (SSCEC). These certificates, required by International Health Regulations (IHR) 2005, replaced the “Deratting” Certificates required under IHR 1969 and may be required by certain “Competent Authorities” (i.e. Foreign Port Authorities) for arriving *ships* (as defined in IHR Article 1; Definitions 1.1). The intent of this MSIB is to clarify the U.S. policy on vessel inspections and issuance of certificates as it pertains to IHR 2005. The following guidance is provided:

- The “Competent Authority” for IHR 2005 in the U.S. is the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Division of Global Migration and Quarantine (DGMQ).
- While CDC DGMQ reserves the right to inspect ships and issue SSCC/SSCEC’s, these certificates are currently **not required** for commercial ships arriving at U.S. ports.
- Port authorities, public agencies, and private organizations **are prohibited** from issuing or requiring SSCC/ SSCEC’s for ships at U.S. ports.
- Per agreement with CDC DGMQ, the U.S. Coast Guard and U.S. Navy have been authorized to conduct inspections and issue SSCC/SSCEC’s (CG-5100B) to ships of their respective services (e.g. U.S. Coast Guard Cutters), as well as vessels of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.
- For cruise ships, as defined in 42 CFR 71.21, the CDC may issue SSCCs/SSCECs upon request during Vessel Sanitation Program (VSP) inspections. Please contact VSP (vsp@cdc.gov) with questions about sanitation inspections on cruise ships.
- Currently, ships **cannot** obtain a SSCC/SSCEC in the U.S., but may obtain a certificate at [these](#) ports outside of the U.S. Vessel operators are encouraged to contact the port prior to arrival to ensure a competent authority will be able to inspect the ship and provide the certificate.

- U.S. ships arriving at foreign ports are reminded to provide any public health information requested by the competent authorities and to facilitate their related public health activities.
 - If required by the competent authority, ship operators must provide: (i) a valid SSC and (ii) a Maritime Declaration of Health.
- U.S. flag ship owners and operators are encouraged to become familiar with applicable U.S. and foreign port of entry requirements including [illness and death reporting](#).
- Please visit the CDC [frequently asked questions](#) webpage for additional information.
- Specific questions regarding IHR 2005 requirements should be directed to CDC DGMQ Maritime Activity at MaritimeAdmin@cdc.gov.

Enclosure: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention letter of 2 November 2009



November 2, 2009

Dear Maritime Industry Partner:

It has come to our recent attention that ships have arrived in foreign countries with ship sanitation certificates from the United States that are invalid because the inspections were sought and conducted from vendors at various ports across the nation who are not authorized to perform them under the current U.S. policy. The purpose of this letter is to address the revision to the International Health Regulations, the phase-out of deratting inspections, and an overview of the current U.S. policy on vessel inspections and the issuance of Ship Sanitation Control Exemption Certificate/Ship Sanitation Control Certificates (“Ship Sanitation Certificates” or “SSCEC/SSCC”).

Revision of the International Health Regulations

On May 23, 2005, the World Health Organization (WHO) adopted a revised version of the International Health Regulations (IHR), which entered into effect for most countries on June 15, 2007. The IHR (2005) contains changes that will increase international coordination of information, reporting, and response to public health emergencies.

Deratting and Ship Sanitation Certificates

Deratting Certificates/Deratting Exemption Certificates issued under the earlier IHR (1969) have been replaced by Ship Sanitation Certificates under the revised IHR (2005). As of December 15, 2007, deratting certificates are no longer valid. Inspectors previously approved to issue deratting certificates are currently not authorized by the United States Government to issue SSCEC/SSCC.

Ship Sanitation Certificate requirements at U.S. ports of entry

The authority to issue, inspect, or require Ship Sanitation Certificates resides solely with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) Division of Global Migration and Quarantine which is the “Competent Authority” under the IHR (2005) for ports of entry in the United States. Although CDC reserves the right to inspect vessels and issue SSCEC/SSCC, these certificates are currently not required for ships arriving at U.S. ports to embark or disembark passengers, crew, or cargo.

Under federal regulations found at 42 C.F.R. § 71.31, CDC grants controlled free pratique to vessels entering U.S. ports of entry. Therefore, port authorities, public agencies, and private organizations are prohibited from issuing or requiring SSCEC/SSEC for seafaring vessels at U.S. ports. Such actions would contradict CDC’s exercise of federal authority under the Supremacy Clause to the U.S. Constitution.

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Per agreement with the CDC, the United States Coast Guard and the United States Navy are authorized to conduct inspections and issue Ship Sanitation Certificates to vessels of their services, as well as vessels of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Additionally, CDC's Vessel Sanitation Program may issue Ship Sanitation Certificates to cruise ships during routine inspections.

This determination has no effect upon requirements established by other sovereign nations.

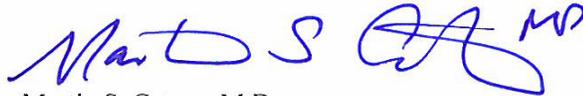
Additional Information

For additional information regarding the IHR, please visit the WHO website:

www.who.int/csr/ihr/en

Thank you for your ongoing support of CDC's mission to control communicable diseases.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Martin S. Cetron, M.D.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Martin S. Cetron, M.D.
Director, Division of Global Migration and Quarantine
National Center for Preparedness, Detection, and Control of
Infectious Diseases