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MSC-MEPC.5/Circ.13  
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**UNIFIED INTERPRETATION ON THE EXPIRATION DATE  
OF STATUTORY CERTIFICATES**

1 The Marine Environment Protection Committee, at its seventieth session (24 to 28 October 2016) and the Maritime Safety Committee, at its ninety-seventh session (21 to 25 November 2016), approved a unified interpretation on the expiration date of statutory certificates, as set out in the annex, with a view to providing more specific guidance on the application of the relevant requirements of the SOLAS 1974, Load Lines 1966 and MARPOL Conventions and associated mandatory codes in relation to assigning the expiration date of statutory certificates, including mandatory documents of compliance.

2 Member States are invited to use the annexed interpretation when applying the relevant provisions of the SOLAS 1974, Load Lines 1966 and MARPOL Conventions and associated mandatory codes, unless explicitly stipulated otherwise by the Administration, and to bring it to the attention of all parties concerned.

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## ANNEX

### UNIFIED INTERPRETATION ON THE EXPIRATION DATE OF STATUTORY CERTIFICATES

The SOLAS 1974, Load Lines 1966 and MARPOL Conventions and associated mandatory codes establish, in a general way, the maximum period of validity of the relevant statutory certificates (e.g. one year, two years, five years), including the mandatory documents of compliance.

The Conventions and associated codes also define, under the Harmonized System of Survey and Certification (HSSC), the words "anniversary date" as the day and the month of each year, which will correspond to the date of expiry of a certificate.

Unless explicitly stipulated otherwise by the Administration, the "expiration date" in respect of the maximum period of validity of a certificate may be the day and the month of:

- .1 after a satisfactory initial survey/verification, the date the initial survey/verification was completed,\* or less one day;
- .2 after a satisfactory renewal survey/verification completed within or after the time window of the survey/verification, the expiration date of the existing certificate;
- .3 after a satisfactory renewal survey/verification completed before the time window of the survey/verification, the date the survey/verification was completed,\* or less one day; or
- .4 after a satisfactory renewal survey completed after the time window of the survey in the case of "special circumstances", as specified in paragraph 5.5 of the *Survey Guidelines under the Harmonized System of Survey and Certification (HSSC), 2015* (resolution. A.1104(29)), the date the survey was completed,\* or less one day.

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\* Refer to the *Unified interpretation of the date of completion of the survey and verification on which the certificates are based* (MSC-MEPC.5/Circ.3).