ZANZIBAR MARITIME AUTHORITY

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Circular No. FSI/04/2026

To: Ship Owners/ Operators, Masters, Recognized Organizations (RO), Agents, Port State Control Authorities, PSC MOU's and Other Interested Parties of Tanzania Zanzibar Registered Vessels

Subject: Issuance and Use of Electronic Certificates.

Purpose: The purpose of this Circular is to establish the policy and procedures of the Tanzania Zanzibar International Register of Shipping (TZIRS) regarding the issuance, use and verification of electronic certificates issued by the Administration.

This Circular aims to facilitate the digital issuance and acceptance of statutory and registry certificates in accordance with the IMO Guidelines for the Use of Electronic Certificates (FAL.5/Circ.39/Rev.2).

Scope and Applicability: This Circular applies to all ships registered under TZIRS and to stakeholders including Shipowners, Ship Operators, Masters and Crew, Port State Control Officers, Recognized Organizations (ROs), Maritime Administrations, and Maritime Service Providers.

This Circular governs certificates issued in electronic format including but not limited to:

- Certificate of Registry (COR)
- Ship Station License (SSL)
- Minimum Safe Manning Document (MSMD)
- International Tonnage Certificate (ITC 1969)
- Other Administrative Certificates issued by TZIRS.

Date: 6 March 2026

Proudly redefining Africa's role in global shipping through integrity, excellence, and leadership!!

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1. Legal Basis and Oversight

Pursuant to the mandate conferred by the Maritime Transport Act No. 5 of 2006 and the Zanzibar Maritime Authority Act No. 3 of 2009, the Zanzibar Maritime Authority (ZMA) and the Tanzania Zanzibar International Register of Shipping (TZIRS) are entrust to oversee matters of Maritime Safety and Security and the proper enforcing and harmonization of standards of Tanzania Zanzibar Ships and ships registered under Maritime Transport Act No. 5 of 2006 related to International Conventions to which the United Republic of Tanzania is a party;

The provisions of this Circular are aligned with the IMO Guidelines for the Use of Electronic Certificates (FAL.5/Circ.39/Rev.2).

2. Continuous Compliance Obligation

The Zanzibar Maritime Authority and TZIRS require that vessels registered under the Tanzania Zanzibar Flag always remain in continuous compliance with all applicable National and International Regulations.

3. Authorization

TZIRS authorizes the issuance of electronic certificates as the official form of certification for ships registered under the Tanzania Zanzibar International Register of Shipping.

Electronic certificates issued by TZIRS have the same legal validity as traditional paper certificates.

Ships may carry:

- the electronic certificate in digital format; or
- a printed copy of the electronic certificate.

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Both forms are valid provided the certificate can be verified through the Administration verification system.

4. Features of Electronic Certificates

Electronic certificates issued by TZIRS include:

- Unique Tracking Number
- Embedded QR Code
- Protection against unauthorized alteration
- Identification of issuing Authority
- Compliance with format required by applicable International Conventions.

5. Verification and Authentication

Electronic certificates issued by TZIRS can be verified through the ZMA verification portal (https://zma.oceansfrontier.com/certificate_validators/new).

Verification may be performed by:

- scanning the QR Code; or
- entering the Unique Tracking Number.

The verification confirms Authenticity, Validity and Certificate details issued by the Administration.

6. Responsibilities of Shipowners and Masters

Shipowners and Masters shall ensure that certificates are properly maintained and accessible onboard, and that printed copies correspond with the electronic original issued by TZIRS.

Electronic certificates should be managed within the Ship's Safety Management System (SMS).

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7. Notification to IMO

TZIRS will notify the International Maritime Organization through the GISIS module regarding the implementation of electronic certificates.

8. Acceptance by Port State Control

Electronic certificates issued by the Tanzania Zanzibar International Register of Shipping (TZIRS) shall be considered valid statutory or registry certificates provided that their authenticity and validity can be verified through the Administration's verification system.

These electronic certificates comply with the Guidelines for the Use of Electronic Certificates adopted by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) under FAL.5/Circ.39/Rev.2, which provide for the issuance, verification and acceptance of certificates in electronic format.

1. Electronic certificates issued by TZIRS have the same legal status and validity as traditional paper certificates.
2. Ships may carry electronic certificates in digital format or a printed version of the electronic certificate, provided that the certificate can be verified through the Administration's verification system.
3. Verification may be performed by scanning the QR Code embedded in the certificate or by entering the Unique Tracking Number through the ZMA verification portal.
4. Port State Control Officers and other Maritime Authorities are invited to verify the authenticity and validity of TZIRS electronic certificates through the verification system when necessary.

Electronic Certificates issued in accordance with the above procedures should be accepted by relevant Authorities in accordance with applicable Port State Control procedures and International Practice.

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9. Entry into force

This Circular enters into force on **6 March 2026.**

For additional enquiries* on *this circular, please contact to:

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REGISTRAR OF SHIPS
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