



South African Maritime Safety Authority

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Date: 07 December 2012

Marine Notice No. 31 of 2012

Cautionary notice concerning Diabetes Mellitus

TO ALL SKIPPERS, MANAGERS, OWNERS AND OPERATORS OF FISHING VESSELS, PRINCIPAL OFFICERS, SURVEYORS , APPROVED MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS, SEAFARERS AND OTHER INTERESTED AND AFFECTED PARTIES

Summary

As a result of the death on board a fishing vessel from diabetic mellitus complications an investigation was conducted and the following policy has immediate effect.

1. In terms of the Merchant Shipping (Eyesight and Medical Examinations) Regulations, 2004 as amended, Annex 1, Regulation 3, Guidance on Medical Examinations of Seafarers, insulin dependent diabetics are to be classed as Category B – permanently unfit for sea hence, not permitted to proceed to sea.
2. Fishing vessel management structures are advised to heed this SAMSA policy. Persons diagnosed with insulin dependent diabetes are not permitted to proceed to sea and to be excluded from their recruitment and induction programs.
3. SAMSA Approved Medical Practitioners are advised to take special precautionary measures when examining Seafarers, taking into account the general symptoms and signs associated with diabetics.
4. Seafarers are cautioned concerning the early warning signs of diabetes;
 - Constant fatigue,
 - Unplanned weight loss,
 - Susceptibility to illness,
 - Poor wound healing,
 - Erectile dysfunction, and
 - Common symptoms of overweight, excessive thirst and excessive urination.
5. Seafarers are advised to have their blood glucose levels checked at regular intervals.
6. Principal Officers and Surveyors conducting approval visits and inspections of Medical Practitioners are advised to discuss the importance of this examination processes with these Practitioners.

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