



REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS
**MINISTRY OF
COMMUNICATIONS AND WORKS**



**DEPARTMENT
OF MERCHANT SHIPPING
LEMESOS**

Circular No. 16/2012

TEN.: 5.13.9

30 March 2012

To all Owners, Managers
and Representatives of Cyprus Ships

Dear friends and collaborators,

Subject: A Note of Appreciation

This is not a circular to inform you about a new law or regulation or a new policy or instruction.

Today is my last day in active service, after almost thirty two years at the helm of the Department of Merchant Shipping and I feel obliged to express to you my sincere thanks and gratitude for your cooperation and support, which have turned Cyprus into a maritime centre and made my career a successful one.

The route to success has been neither smooth nor easy. At the beginning, it was just the Ships' Register, with a fleet of ambiguous quality. The Department had not the necessary capacity to exercise effective jurisdiction and control over the ships flying the Cyprus flag. However, its small staff comprising young officers in their 20s and 30s had enthusiasm and vision and established a close and efficient working relationship with the local shipping community and the local lawyers and accountants representing foreign shipowners. The cumulative knowledge, creative thinking and collective action has led to modern legislation, imaginative policies and capacity building.



Cyprus shipping entered a fast development phase and unlike other open registries, the growth in the registered fleet was accompanied with an influx of international companies which established themselves locally and offered shipmanagement services and other shipping related activities and products.

The Department of Merchant Shipping expanded its mission beyond ship registration and became active in regulating and facilitating the development of all merchant shipping activities, except the commercial operation of the ports, which falls under the competency of the Cyprus Ports Authority. The policies and actions of the Department have been founded on three principles:

Quality – Competitiveness – Reliability of Service

The related actions were fully supported by the local shipping community and often demanded by it.

The results are well known to all of you. Despite persistent adverse external interference, Cyprus has become an important maritime centre. The Cyprus flag flies on the tenth largest fleet in the world. Its reputation and quality went through a dramatic improvement, from the black and grey lists to the white lists of all Memoranda of Understanding on Port State Control.

Today, Cyprus is a member of the European Union and its competitive taxation system for shipping has been approved by the European Commission, following intensive negotiations.

The officers of the Department participate actively in the work of all international organizations dealing with maritime affairs as well as that of the European Union and have managed to establish an influential role for Cyprus.

The Department of Merchant Shipping is now a vibrant organization staffed with well trained, experienced and highly competent officers, capable of leading it to higher achievements.

The basic principles of its policies and actions are well entrenched and its close and constructive cooperation with the private sector, in particular with its organized maritime associations, is well established.

My departure from active service in the Department of Merchant Shipping will not affect its functioning in any way. On the contrary, it will give the opportunity to its younger officers and to my eventual successor to pursue new initiatives and even higher goals.

I wish to conclude by expressing once again my profound gratitude to all of you who have contributed, in the spirit of cooperation and mutual benefit, to the development of Cyprus as a maritime centre, which has also had a positive reflection on my career, as one of the people involved in the process.

With my sincere felicitations,



Serghios S. Serghiou
Director
Department of Merchant Shipping

Cc: -Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Communications and Works
- Maritime Offices of the Department of Merchant Shipping abroad
- Attorney General of the Republic
- Governor, Central Bank of Cyprus
- Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance
- Permanent Secretary, Planning Bureau
- Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Diplomatic Missions and Honorary Consular Officers of the Republic
- Registrar of Companies
- Cyprus Shipping Chamber
- Cyprus Union of Shipowners
- PEO Trade Union
- SEK Trade Union
- Cyprus Bar Association
- Cyprus Association of Chartered Accountants