Spotting a fake is no simple matter

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Spelling a fake is no simple matter

A certificate is to approach the institution that issued it and ask them to verify the certificate. However, in the course of the research we found that links between institutions were frequently non-existent or, where they existed, were used. Often certificates would be issued without any independent verification of a certificate. In plain terms, the safe and effective operation of vessels across the world’s seas depends on the existence of fully qualified and adequately skilled seafarers. On a day-to-day basis seafarers place great trust on the abilities and skills of their fellow crew. If just one of those seafarers has come aboard with fraudulent obtained certificates and lacks the skills necessary, then a profession already suffused with risk becomes even riskier.

Perhaps this article adopts a somewhat negative tone, but this is because fraudulent certification exists, and the only way of tackling it successfully is both to treat the source of the problem and to stop the circulation of existing fraudulent certificates through the maritime community. When it comes to the latter, the maritime sector is only beginning to address the problem – a problem that will remain until the approach becomes more systematic and recognises that it needs to be addressed by the maritime community as a whole.