

**[ MIA MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 82, January  
21, 1994 ]**

**GUIDELINES ON THE ISSUANCE OF ENDORSEMENT  
CERTIFICATES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE STCW 1978  
CONVENTION**

**I**

**Background, Purpose and Legal Bases**

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) adopted the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) on 7 July 1978. The Convention entered into force on 28 April 1984. The Republic of the Philippines is a signatory to this Convention and acceded to the Convention in May 1984. The Government has designated the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) as the "Administration" for purposes of implementing the provisions of said Convention. The Philippine Constitution of 1987 in Article II, Sec. 2, states that the Philippines adopts the generally accepted principles of international law as part of the law of the land.

The STCW Convention aims to promote safety of life and property at sea and the protection of the marine environment by establishing in common agreement international standards of training, certification and watchkeeping for seafarers. In accordance with Article I, State parties must take all necessary steps to ensure that seafarers are qualified and fit for their duties vis-a-vis the safety of life and property at sea and the protection of the marine environment.

**II**

**Definition of terms**

1. **Convention** refers to the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW), 1978. Every reference to the Convention constitutes at the same time reference to the Annex.
2. **Maritime Administrator** refers to the Administrator of the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA).
3. **STCW Certificate** means a valid document, by whatever name it may be known, issued by or under the authority of the Administration or recognized by the Administration authorizing the holder to serve as stated in the 1978 STCW Convention. In the case of Filipino seafarers, it means the endorsement of certificates and ratings certificates issued by MARINA.

4. **Dispensation Certificate** means the certificate issued by competent authority in accordance with Article VIII of the Convention permitting a specified seafarer to serve in a specified ship for a specified period not exceeding six months in a capacity other than that of the radio operator or radiotelephone operator, except as provided by the relevant Radio Regulations for which he does not hold the appropriate certificate.

5. **Ocean-going ships** refers to ships navigating overseas or in international waters, either Philippine or foreign-registered ships.

6. **Port** means a harbor either government or privately owned, with loading and unloading facilities, or for anchoring, docking and/or mooring.

7.. **Fishing Vessel** shall mean a vessel used for catching fish, whales, seals, walrus or other living resources of the sea.

8. **Wooden Ships of Primitive Build** refers to ships made of wood and provided with sails.

### **III Application**

These Guidelines shall apply to Filipino seafarers serving on board ships operating coastwise, except those serving on board:

1. warships, naval auxiliaries or other ships owned or operated by the government and engaged only on governmental non-commercial service;
2. fishing vessels;
3. pleasure yachts not engaged in trade; or
4. wooden ships of primitive build.

Seafarers seeking endorsement, certification and/or authentication of certificates shall directly apply in person with the MARINA.

These Guidelines shall also apply to shipping companies and manning agencies which request endorsement certificates for and in behalf of their seafarers.

Shipping companies and/or manning agencies, through their duly authorized representatives, shall be allowed to apply in behalf of their seafarers who are actually employed on board ships under the following instances only:

1. **PROMOTION** — Processing of certificates as a result of promotion of seafarers who are on board shall be allowed subject to the company's submission of the latest STCW Endorsement Certificate or Ratings' Certificate and the latest PRC license, as applicable, together with an Affidavit of Responsibility guaranteeing the payment of penalty that shall be imposed against the seafarer in case any document turns out to be spurious;

2. **REPLACEMENT OF LOST CERTIFICATE** — Seafarers on board vessels shall apply for the issuance of a replacement certificate through their respective shipping company or manning agency, by presenting an Affidavit of Loss, duly notarized;

3. **RENEWAL OF CERTIFICATE** — Seafarers whose certificates are about to expire while on board may have their certificates renewed through their respective shipping company or manning agency, by submitting a copy of their STCW Endorsement or Ratings' Certificate. The original certificate shall be surrendered to the MARINA within thirty (30) days after renewal.

#### **IV Where to Apply**

All seafarers who are employed or to be employed on ships operating coastwise shall apply at the MARINA Central Office or at the MARINA Regional Office closest to the residence of the seafarer or to the homeport of the vessel they are employed in.

#### **V Qualifications/Requirements**

1. **Masters and Officers** — All Masters, deck, engine and radio officers shall be required to have their licenses endorsed by the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) provided, however, that they comply with the following requirements:

a. Master and Deck Officer:

- 1) Must submit license duly authenticated by the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) appropriate to the position being applied for;
- 2) Must have passed a thorough medical examination, particularly eyesight (including color vision) and hearing examinations from a Department of Health (DOH) accredited hospital or clinic;
- 3) Must have served on board vessels of 250 gross register tons (GRT) or more and have an approved length of sea-going service in the deck department as follows:
  - a. Master Mariner — two (2) years as Chief Mate
  - b. Chief Mate — one (1) year as Second Mate
  - c. Second Mate — one (1) year as Third Mate
  - d. Third Mate — one (1) year as Apprenticemate

Presentation of the Seaman's Service Record Book shall serve as proof of the applicant's sea service.

4) Must present certificates of training as required by these Guidelines.

b. Engineer Officer:

- 1) Must submit a license duly authenticated by the PRC;
- 2) Must have passed a thorough medical examination, particularly eyesight (including primary color vision/perception) and hearing examinations from a DOH-accredited hospital or clinic;
- 3) Must have served on board a sea-going ship powered by main propulsion machinery of 750 kw propulsion power or more and have an adequate length of approved sea - going service as follows:
  - a. Chief Engineer — two (2) years as 2nd Engineer
  - b. Second Engineer — one (1) year as 3rd Engineer
  - c. Third Engineer — one (1) year as 4th Engineer
  - d. Fourth Engineer — two (2) years as Apprentice Engineer

Presentation of the Seaman's Service Record Book shall serve as proof of the applicant's sea service.

- 4) Must present certificates of training as required by this Guidelines.

c. Radio Operator:

- 1) Must submit a First Class Radiotelegraph (1 RTG) license or General Operator's Certificate duly authenticated by the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC);
- 2) Must have passed a thorough medical examination, particularly on hearing and speech clarity from a DOH-accredited hospital/clinic;
- 3) Must have served on board sea-going vessels for at least one (1) year as radio officer/operator or apprentice radio operator;
- 4) Must present certificates of training as required by these Guidelines.

2. *Ratings* — Only ratings performing deck or engine watchkeeping duties shall be certificated/endorsed, i.e., they shall be issued Ratings' Certificates provided they comply with the following requirements/qualifications;

a. Deck Ratings:

- 1) At least 18 years of age;
- 2) Must have passed a thorough medical examination, particularly eyesight (including color vision/perception) and hearing examinations from a DOH-accredited hospital or clinic;
- 3) Must have served on board vessels of 250 GRT or more and must have adequate sea experience as indicated below:

(i) *for graduates of BSMT/AMT* — they must either have at least one (1) year shipboard experience or apprenticeship training in the deck department with exposure in navigational watch for at least six (6) months under the supervision of a qualified deck officer;

(ii) *for graduates of Basic Seaman's Course (BSC)* — they

must have at least 1 1/2 years of shipboard experience in the bridge with exposure in navigational watch for at least twelve (12) months under the supervision of a qualified deck officer;

(iii) *for undergraduates or non-graduates of maritime courses* — they must have at least 1 1/2 years shipboard experience in the deck department with exposure in navigational watch for at least twelve (12) months under the supervision of a qualified deck officer.

- 4) For ratings cited under a.(3) (i) and (ii) of this set of guidelines: must submit a copy of diploma or transcript of records from maritime school and Special Order (S.O.) from the DECS;
- 5) For ratings cited under a.(3) (iii): must have successfully undergone a special training on navigational watchkeeping;
- 6) Must present certificates of training on Firefighting, First Aid at Sea, Personal Survival Technique and Survival Craft/Life-boat Handling.

b. Engine Ratings:

- 1) At least 18 years of age;
- 2) Must have passed a thorough medical examination, particularly eyesight (including primary color vision/perception) and hearing examinations from a DOH-accredited hospital or clinic;
- 3) Must have served on board vessels of 750 kw or more:

(i) *for graduates of BSMar.E/AME* — they must have at least two (2) years shipboard experience or apprenticeship training in the engine room, with exposure in engineering watch for at least one (1) year under the supervision of a qualified engine officer.

(ii) *for graduates of Basic Seaman's Course (BSC)* - they must have at least 2 1/2 years of shipboard experience in the engine room with exposure in engineering watch for at least 1 1/2 years under the supervision of a qualified engine officer.

(iii) *for undergraduates or non graduates of maritime courses* — they must have at least 2 1/2 years shipboard experience or apprenticeship training in the engine room with exposure in engineering watch for at least 1 1/2 years under the supervision of a qualified engine officer.

- 4) For ratings cited under b.(3) (i) and (ii) of this set of guidelines: must submit a copy of diploma or transcript of records from maritime school and Special Order (S.O.) from the DECS;
- 5) For ratings cited under b.(3) (iii): must have successfully undergone a special training course on engine watchkeeping;
- 6) Must present certificates of training on Firefighting, First Aid at Sea,