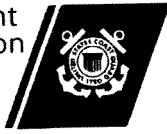


U.S. Department
of Transportation

United States
Coast Guard



Commanding Officer
United States Coast Guard
National Maritime Center

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NMC Policy Letter No. 04-02

11 January 2002

From: Commanding Officer, U. S. Coast Guard National Maritime Center
To: Distribution

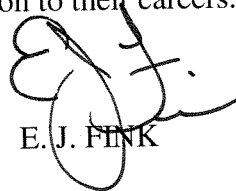
Subj: APPLICANTS FOR OCEAN OR NEAR COASTAL MASTER AND CHIEF MATE
LICENSES FOR SERVICE ON VESSELS OF 3000 GROSS TONNAGE (GT) OR MORE
WITH QUALIFYING SERVICE OR TRAINING BEGINNING ON OR AFTER 1
AUGUST 1998 AND ALL APPLICANTS BEGINNING 1 FEBRUARY 2002

Ref: (a) International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and
Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, as amended (STCW)
(b) Title 46, Code of Federal Regulations (46 CFR), Part 10

1. **PURPOSE.** This policy letter provides guidance about the requirements for processing and evaluating an application, and issuance of, a master or chief mate license valid for service on ships of 3,000 gross tonnage or more and STCW certification for master or chief mate. It applies to:
 - a. Applicants who began the service or training to qualify for the license after 1 August 1998; and
 - b. All applicants beginning 1 February 2002
2. **ACTION.** Commanding officers of units with marine safety responsibilities should bring this policy letter to the attention of those segments of maritime industry with interest in the personnel field. Personnel at Regional Examination Centers should use the information in this policy letter for evaluating applicants for the licenses to which it applies. This policy letter will be distributed by electronic means only. It is available on the World Wide Web at <http://www.uscg.mil/STCW/m-policy.htm>.
3. **DISCUSSION.**
 - a. Applicants for licenses as master or chief mate that authorize service on seagoing vessels of any gross tonnage or more must meet the requirements of the STCW as well as the requirements of the licensing regulations. Many of the STCW's requirements exceed the requirements of the domestic regulations and therefore take precedence; e.g., length of required sea service. Where the requirements of the domestic regulations exceed the STCW's requirements or have no STCW equivalent, they will apply; e.g., character requirements. Enclosure (1) is a summary of the requirements and provides guidance to a license applicant. Evaluators will find enclosure (1) essential for reviewing applications for these licenses.

Subj: APPLICANTS FOR OCEAN OR NEAR COASTAL MASTER AND CHIEF MATE LICENSES FOR SERVICE ON VESSELS OF 3000 GROSS TONNAGE (GT) OR MORE WITH QUALIFYING SERVICE OR TRAINING BEGINNING ON OR AFTER 1 AUGUST 1998 AND ALL APPLICANTS BEGINNING 1 FEBRUARY 2002

- b. There were two significant changes imposed as a result of the 1995 amendments to the STCW. One relates to required training, and the other applies to the assessments of professional skills. These are discussed below.
- c. The STCW requires that each applicant "have completed approved education and training..." Enclosure (1) includes a list of required training. Applicants must provide evidence of having completed training in these subjects by producing course completion certificates.
- d. Under the STCW, an applicant must actually demonstrate the practical ability to carry out certain professional duties and tasks. Enclosure (2) provides guidance to those who will witness and attest to the applicant's successful completion of these tasks. Enclosure (3) is a summary of the tasks that must be demonstrated, and it may serve as a record of successful completion of the assessments of the applicant's professional skills. Enclosure (4) lists the criteria that the designated examiner must follow when assessing a mariner's professional skills. Strict adherence to the standards therein ensures that all applicants are evaluated equally.
- e. Mariners who seek issuance of a license as master or chief mate on or shortly after 1 February 2002 will not have had sufficient time to complete all of the professional requirements set forth in Enclosure (1) to qualify for certification under the STCW. Enclosure (5) provides an alternative scheme for those mariners to qualify for the STCW certification with minimum disruption to their careers.


E. J. FINK

Encl: (1) Qualification as master and chief mate on vessels of 3000 GT or more.
(2) Conducting Mariner Assessments
(3) Record of completion of practical assessments
(4) Performance standards for assessments of competence
(5) Alternative Scheme

Dist: Commandant (G-MSO)
All District Commanders (m)
COs, all MSOs
All Activity Commanders
All RECs