

**Guidelines for the Issue of Hong Kong Licences
to holders of non-Hong Kong Certificates
under the International Convention on Standards of Training,
Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, as Amended**

The 1995 Amendments to the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978 (STCW 95) entered full force on 1 February 2002. In accordance with Regulations I/2 and I/10 of STCW 95 and Hong Kong legislation, a seafarer manning an officer's station on a Hong Kong registered ships is required to hold either a Hong Kong Certificate of Competency or a Hong Kong Licence of the appropriate class along with an endorsement in conformity with the STCW 95 format and requirements.

Issue of Full Term Licences

2. STCW 95 Certificates of Competency issued by the following Administrations are recognized for the issue of full term Hong Kong Licences, with a period of validity up to the expiry date of the original certificate being recognized :

Australia	Liberia
Bangladesh	Malaysia
Belgium	Myanmar
Bulgaria	Netherlands
Canada	New Zealand
China, People's Republic of	Norway
Croatia	Pakistan
Cyprus	Panama
Denmark	Papua New Guinea
Egypt	Philippines
Estonia	Poland
Finland	Romania
France	Russia
Georgia	Serbia
Germany	Singapore
Ghana	Slovenia
Greece	South Africa
India	Spain
Indonesia	Sri Lanka
Iran	Sweden
Ireland	Ukraine
Korea, Republic of	United Kingdom
Latvia	Vietnam

Issue of Short Term Licences

3. STCW 95 Certificates of Competency issued by the following Administrations are recognized for the issue of short term Hong Kong Licence with a period of validity of 12 months or up to the expiry date of the original certificate being recognized, whichever is earlier:

Brazil	Malta
Czech Republic	Marshall Islands
Dominica	Solomon Islands
Iceland	

Revalidation of Short Term Licences

4. Subject to the validity of the STCW 95 Certificates of Competency, holders of short term Hong Kong licences can apply for revalidation of their licences for another period of 12 months if they can produce satisfactory proof of their continued employment on a Hong Kong registered ship upon payment of revalidation fee. The current fee for revalidation is HK\$155.

5. Upon a decision of full recognition of those STCW 95 certificates issued by the Administrations listed in paragraph 3, the issue of short term licences based on such certificates will be discontinued and full term licences will be issued instead. Holders of these short term licences can then apply for renewal of their short term licences with full term licences. The fee for such renewal will be HK\$400.

Issue of GMDSS Operator Endorsement

6. Applicants holding a recognized STCW 95 certificate of competency as deck and engineer officer may, if they are also holding an appropriate and valid GMDSS radio operator certificate issued by one of the Administrations listed in paragraph 2 or paragraph 3 above, apply for a GMDSS operator endorsement together with the licence application. The GMDSS operator endorsement, if approved, will be included in the Hong Kong Licence. The endorsement will expire on the same date as the recognized GMDSS radio operator certificate. Holders of such GMDSS operator endorsements are considered to be qualified to work as radio operators on Hong Kong registered GMDSS ships.

7. As an alternative to paragraph 6 above, deck officers and engineer officers may, if they are also holding an appropriate and valid GMDSS radio operator certificate issued by the Administrations listed in paragraphs 2 and 3 above, apply to the Office of the Telecommunications Authority (OFTA) for a stand-alone certificate of equivalent competency with an STCW 95 endorsement for the purpose of serving as radio operators on board Hong Kong registered GMDSS ships. Radio officers holding a radio operator certificate issued by the Administrations listed in paragraphs 2 and 3 above should continue to apply to OFTA for the issue of a certificate of equivalent competency with an STCW 95 endorsement.

Issue of Dangerous Cargo Endorsement

8. Applicants for a Hong Kong Licence may, if they are also holding an appropriate and valid dangerous cargo endorsement issued by the Certification Authority of their original certificates of competency for service on board tankers, apply for an equivalent dangerous cargo endorsement on the Hong Kong Licence. The previous practice of approving and issuing stand-alone dangerous cargo endorsements to licence holders has been discontinued.

Application Procedures

9. Application for the issue of a Hong Kong Licence should be made on the prescribed application form. Application forms can be obtained from the Seafarers' Certification Section on the 3rd floor of the Harbour Building, or can be downloaded from the Marine Department's website: <http://www.mardep.gov.hk/en/forms/pdf/mo713.rtf>. Each application should be accompanied with the following documents :

- (a) The certificate of competency held.
- (b) Dangerous Cargo Endorsement - if the applicant applies for a dangerous cargo endorsement on the Hong Kong Licence.
- (c) GMDSS Radio Certificate if the applicant applies for a GMDSS Operator Endorsement on the Hong Kong Licence.
- (d) Passport.
- (e) A valid medical fitness certificate issued by an approved medical practitioner.
- (f) Two passport size photographs (40 mm x 50 mm). The photographs should show the full face from head to shoulder without any hat. The name of the applicant should be printed on the back of each photograph.
- (g) Prescribed fee in Hong Kong Dollars for each application. All cheques, drafts, orders and remittance should be made payable to "The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region" (or "The Government of the HKSAR") and crossed. Cash must not be sent by post. The fee for the issue of a Hong Kong Licence is HK\$400 to be paid when submitting application.

Note: For Item Nos. (a) to (e), a legible true copy certified by the employer instead of the original certificate would be acceptable. The passport copy should include date of issue, date of birth and nationality.

Acknowledgment of application

10. Ship owner/agent applying for Hong Kong Licences on behalf of officers under their employment should complete the form of "Consolidated Application for the Issue of Hong Kong Licence(s)" together with legible copies of documents stipulated in paragraph 9 above, and fax the same to the Seafarers' Certification Section on fax no. (852) 2541 6754. The form can be obtained from the Seafarers' Certification Section on the 3rd floor of the Harbour Building, or can be downloaded from the Marine Department's website: <http://www.mardep.gov.hk/en/forms/pdf/mo713a.rtf>. Upon receipt of the above documents and initial vetting, the "Consolidated Application for the Issue of Hong Kong Licence(s)" will be endorsed by this Department as acknowledgement of the receipt of application in accordance with Regulation I/10 of STCW 95.

11. This acknowledgement, together with the applicant's original certificate of competency, will enable the holder to serve on a Hong Kong registered ship in the specified or lower rank for a period not exceeding 3 months. Formal application together with certified true copies of the required documents should be submitted as soon as possible to ensure that the licences can be issued and received by the applicant within the stipulated 3 months period.

Authenticity of Documents

12. In accordance with the guidance promulgated by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) for preventing fraudulent certificates, the authenticity of the original certificate of competency will be verified from the issuing authority.

Rejection of Application

13. The Director of Marine reserves the right to reject an application for a Hong Kong Licence or an endorsement if he is not entirely satisfied that the applicant is a fit person to be a holder of the licence or endorsement and to act competently in the capacity to which it relates. He also reserves the right to subsequently cancel a licence or endorsement if it is established that the licence or endorsement was issued based on fraudulent information.

Enquires

14. Enquiries relating to certification, licensing and GMDSS operator endorsement procedures for deck and engineer officers should be directed to:

Senior Surveyor
Seafarers' Certification Section
Marine Department
3/F, Harbour Building
38 Pier Road, Central
Hong Kong

Tel. No.: (852) 2852 4368
Fax No.: (852) 2541 6754
E-mail : ssrt @mardep.gov.hk

15. Enquires relating to certificate of equivalent competency for radio operators should be directed to:

Support Services Sub-section
Office of the Telecommunications Authority (OFTA)
36/F, Wu Chung House
213, Queen Road East
Wan Chai
Hong Kong

Tel. No.: (852) 2961 6608
Fax No.: (852) 2803 5113
E-mail: maritime@ofta.gov.hk