

Hong Kong Registered Ships

Guidance on the Application for Minimum Safe Manning Certificate

The purpose of this guidance is to assist the ship owners/managers to apply for the Minimum Safe Manning Certificate (MSMC) for cargo vessels registered in Hong Kong. It contains procedures, documents required and the estimated manning levels for deck and engine departments under different conditions.

1. Procedures and Documents Required :

Application form for the MSMC can be retrieved from the Hong Kong Marine Department web site at http://www.mardep.gov.hk/en/forms/pdf/msmc_app.pdf (English version). The application for MSMC is free of charge.

Applicants should complete the application form, sign the Declaration in the last page of the form, and submit either by email (ss_css@mardep.gov.hk) or fax (852) 2545 0556 or in person together with the copy of the supporting documents as [listed in section 9](#) of the application form.

An application with insufficient supporting documents will not be processed. In order to avoid delay in processing the application, you are advised to verify the correctness and completeness of the application form and all required supporting document before submitting your application in one batch rather than item by item. Please note additional documents or information may be required if necessary.

In the event that this Department is not satisfied with the proposed minimum manning scale put forward by the owner or the management company, a new manning scale will be [recommended](#) by this Department. In case the owner or ship management company [disagrees](#) with the recommended manning scale counter proposal, they can arrange a practical demonstration by their crew to carry out the essential tasks in the context of their safe manning proposal for assessment by a surveyor of this Department. The cost involved for such assessment would be borne by the owners or operators.

In the event of any change to the equipment, construction, use of the ship, or the provisions of the approved Ship's Security Plan ("SSP") that may affect the safe manning level of number, insufficient manning level in complying with the hours of rest requirements or change of management company, the owner or ship management company should [revise the minimum safe manning scale for the operational needs](#) and make an application for the issue of a new safe manning document. Upon receipt of the new certificate by the applicant, the obsolete manning certificate should be returned to Cargo Ships Safety Section for cancellation.

2. Estimated Manning Levels :

The manning level varies with the size of the cargo vessel and type of mooring arrangement for deck department, and with the engine power and mode of engine room watch for engine department. The owner or ship management company of a Hong Kong registered ship is required to make an

assessment of the number and grades of officers and ratings necessary for the safe operation and the security of the ship in accordance with the IMO resolution A.1047(27).

The manning level on board should be sufficient to ensure that:

- (a) the watchkeeping standard stipulated in Chapter VIII, Part A of the *STCW Code* can be maintained by identifying all the functions to be undertaken on board during a representative voyage;
- (b) the officers and the ratings can perform their duties in accordance with the provisions of the approved SSP and determine the minimum number of crew required to undertake concurrent operations safely and to carry out security duties in accordance with the approved SSP;
- (c) the officers and ratings are not required to work such long hours or under such condition that may jeopardize the safety and security of the ship, or be injurious to their own personal health and safety by identifying:
 - i. the skill and experience required to perform those functions; and
 - ii. those functions in normal operations which need to be undertaken concurrently;
- (d) the owner or ship manager shall assess the proposed manning scale and they should ensure that:
 - i. the working arrangements with respect to the skill and training of the crew are capable of undertaking concurrent and continuous operations; and
 - ii. the working arrangements allow for sufficient rest periods to avoid fatigue.

2.1 Officers:

The number and grades of officers are stipulated in the Merchant Shipping (Seafarers) (Certification of Officers) Regulation. The following is extracted from the Regulation for reference.

Minimum Safe Manning Scale for Officers

Sea-going ships		Deck Officer			Marine Engineer Officer * ¹		
		Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3
1.	Any passenger ships	1	1	2			
2.	Ships, other than passenger ships, of 3000 gross tonnage or more	1	1	2			
3.	Ships, other than passenger ships, of under 3000 gross tonnage	1	1	1			
4.	Any ships of 3000 kilowatts propulsion power or more				1	1	1
5.	Any ships of 750 kilowatts or more but under 3000 kilowatts propulsion power					1* ²	2

*¹ for non-UMS system in engine room, one more Marine Engineer Officer (Class 3) is required

*² A service endorsement is required.

If the proposed numbers and grades of officers differ from those set out above, the application form should be accompanied by a letter setting out the justification for the difference(s). The letter should cover the principles set out in the IMO Resolution A.1047(27). Exemption from the Regulation will only be considered where the size of the ship, length of voyage, trading pattern or other special operational environment warrants a reduction. Inspection of the ship by a Government surveyor may be required. Where the issue of any certificate is dependent upon any survey or inspection to be undertaken, there shall be payable, in addition to the appropriate fee specified in the Merchant Shipping (Fees) Regulations and the Schedule together with any travelling or other expenses involved, if any.

2.2 Ratings:

The manning level varies with the trading patterns of the vessel, cargo carried, type and size of ships, mode of engine room watch and the mooring arrangement of the cargo vessel. The number and grades of ratings are listed below for reference.

Minimum Safe Manning Scale for Ratings

Ships Gross Tonnage	STCW Reg.	Deck Ratings		STCW Reg.	Engine Ratings	
		+MOD	-MOD		UMS	N/UMS
500 GT or more but under 3,000 GT	AS(D) II/5	2	2	AS(E) III/5	1	1
	RW(D) II/4	2	3	RW(E) III/4	-	1
3,000 GT or more but under 10,000 GT	AS(D) II/5	2	2	AS(E) III/5	1	1
	RW(D) II/4	2	3	RW(E) III/4	1	2
10,000 GT and above	AS(D) II/5	2	2	AS(E) III/5	1	1
	RW(D) II/4	3	4	RW(E) III/4	1	2

Definitions:

For the purpose of the application for Minimum Safe Manning Certificate, unless expressly provided otherwise :

1. AS(D) — Able Seafarer Deck (STCW Reg. II/5);
2. AS(E) — Able Seafarer Engine (STCW Reg. III/5);
3. RW(D) — Rating forming part of a navigational watch (STCW Reg. II/4);
4. RW(E) — Rating forming part of an engineering watch (STCW Reg. III/4);
5. OR(D) — Other Deck Ratings (STCW Reg. VI/1);
6. OR(E) — Other Engine Room Ratings (STCW Reg. VI/1);
7. UMS — Unmanned Machinery Space;

8. N/UMS — A vessel equipped with a conventional (Non UMS) engine room;
9. + MOD (+ Mooring Lines On Drums) — refers to the mooring arrangement and requires:
 - (a) two mooring lines per docking station to be equipped with either self-tension winches or mooring ropes carried permanently on winch drum and not requiring to be stoppered off and transferred to bitts; **and**
 - (b) the back spring at each docking station to be served by a self-tension winch or a spring carried permanently on a winch drum not requiring stoppering off and transfer to bitts or of limited size (3 ½ inches or 30 mm);
10. – MOD (– Mooring Lines On Drums) — equates to conventional mooring arrangement, i.e., winch or windlass drum ends are used to warp mooring ropes and spring which are transferred to bitts after being stoppered off.

2.3 Ship's Cook:

The minimum mandatory provision from Regulation 3.2 of the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC), 2006 is that seafarers working on or ships operating commercially with 10 crew or more must carry a qualified cook onboard.

Enquiries relating to the requirements on the training and qualification of cook for Hong Kong registered ships should be made to:

Assistant Shipping Master
 Mercantile Marine Office, Marine Department
 3/F, Harbour Building
 38 Pier Road, Central, Hong Kong

 Tel: +(852) 2852 3061
 Fax: +(852) 2545 4669
 E-mail: mmo_mdd@mardep.gov.hk

2.4 Manning scale for cargo vessels less than 3,000 GT:

If the proposed numbers and grades of the officers and ratings differ from those set out in paragraphs 2.1 and 2.2 above, the application form should be accompanied by a letter setting out the justifications for the difference(s). The letter should cover the principles set out in the IMO Resolution A.1047(27). Exemption from the Regulation will only be considered where the size of the cargo vessel, length of voyage, trading pattern, or other special operational environment warrants a reduction.

2.5 Dangerous Cargo Endorsement:

In accordance with the Merchant Shipping (Seafarers) (Tankers) Regulation:-

Deck officers, engineer officers, electro-technical officers on the various types of tanker are required to hold certificates of competency or licences that carry basic dangerous cargo endorsement(s) or certificates of proficiency for dangerous cargo operation for the same type of tanker; and Master,

chief mate, chief engineer, second engineer and any other person having an immediate responsibility for loading, discharging, care in transit, handling of cargo, tank cleaning or other cargo-related operations on the various types of tankers are required to hold certificates of competency or licences that carry advanced dangerous cargo endorsement(s) or certificates of proficiency for dangerous cargo operation in accordance with the relevant determinations made under Sections 8 and 10 of the Merchant Shipping (Seafarers) (Certification of Officers) Regulation.

Ratings assigned specific duties and responsibilities related to cargo or cargo equipment on the various types of tanker shall hold a certificate of proficiency for dangerous cargo operation or certificate in basic training for the same type of tanker cargo operations.

3 Enquiries:

Enquiries relating to the application for Minimum Safe Manning Certificate should be made to:

Senior Surveyor
Cargo Ships Safety Section
Marine Department
24/F, Harbour Building
38 Pier Road, Central
Hong Kong

Tel: +(852) 2852 4510
Fax: +(852) 2545 0556
E-mail: ss_css@mardep.gov.hk