



MARINE DEPARTMENT
GOVERNMENT OF THE HONG KONG
SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION

Certificates of Proficiency for Navigational Watch Ratings' Determinations

(2022 Edition)

Made under Section 7(3) of the
Merchant Shipping (Seafarers) (Navigational Watch) Regulation (Cap.478AH)

(Rev.2/2022)

MERCHANT SHIPPING (SEAFARERS) ORDINANCE
(CHAPTER 478)

**Certificates of Proficiency
for Navigational Watch Ratings' Determinations**

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Merchant Shipping (Seafarers) (Navigational Watch) Regulation (Cap.478AH)

**Marine Department
The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region**

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SECTION 1

COMMENCEMENT, INTERPRETATION & GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1.1 Commencement

- 1.1.1 The Certificates of Proficiency for Navigational Watch Ratings' Determinations (the Determinations) are made by the Seafarers' Authority (hereafter referred to as "the Authority") under powers granted by the Merchant Shipping (Seafarers) (Navigational Watch) Regulation (Cap.478AH) and are the second edition that shall be effected on 28 February 2022.

1.2 Interpretation

- 1.2.1 In the Determinations, unless the context otherwise requires:

"approved" means approved or recognized by the Director of Marine;

"Authority" means the Seafarers' Authority established by section 4(1) of the Merchant Shipping (Seafarers) Ordinance, Cap.478. For the purposes of the Determinations, Director of Marine is the Authority;

"Convention" means the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, as from time to time revised or amended by any revision or amendment to any provision of such Convention that applies to Hong Kong;

"Director" means the Director of Marine;

"rating" means a seafarer other than –

- (a) the master;
- (b) an officer; or
- (c) a seafarer not directly connected with the normal manning of the ship;

"registered person" means a person whose name is entered in the register kept pursuant to section 7 of the Merchant Shipping (Seafarers) Ordinance, Cap.478;

"STCW Code" means the Seafarers' Training, Certification and Watchkeeping Code published by the International Maritime Organization, as from time to time revised or amended by any revision or amendment to any provision of such Code that applies to Hong Kong.

1.3 General Requirements

- 1.3.1 The subsequent sections of the Determinations set out the training and qualification requirements for navigational watch ratings and the conditions to be satisfied by any person to qualify for a certificate of proficiency, the manner in which the attainment of such standards or the satisfaction of such conditions is to be established, the procedure for the application and issue of a certificate of proficiency.

1.3.2 Any person who feels aggrieved by any decision of the Authority to refuse to issue a certificate of proficiency may appeal against the decision to the Administrative Appeals Board within 30 days of being informed of such decision.

1.3.3 The Director may, at his discretion, permit exemption from any or all of the provisions of the Determinations.

1.4 Transitional Provisions

1.4.1 During the transitional period, a contravention of section 4(1) does not constitute an offence under section 13 of the Merchant Shipping (Seafarers) (Navigational Watch) Regulation (Cap.478AH).

1.4.2 In this section –
transitional period means the period beginning on 1 December 2016 and ending on 31 December 2016.

SECTION 2

CERTIFICATES OF PROFICIENCY FOR NAVIGATIONAL WATCH RATINGS

GENERAL PROVISIONS

2.1 Application

- 2.1.1 The applicant for a Certificate of Proficiency for Navigational Watch Ratings must complete an application form which may be obtained from the Marine Department, Seagoing Examination and Mercantile Marine Office, or by post from:

Marine Department
Seagoing Examination and Mercantile Marine Office
3/F Harbour Building
38 Pier Road
Central
Hong Kong

The application form could also be downloaded from the Marine Department's website <https://www.mardep.gov.hk/en/forms/home.html#seagoing>).

- 2.1.2 Applicants should return the completed application form to the Seagoing Examination and Mercantile Marine Office together with the documents as stated in the application form.
- 2.1.3 The application must be accompanied by any evidence as may be necessary to establish that the requirements and conditions for the issue of the certificate being applied for have been satisfied.
- 2.1.4 It is important that the correct procedure for application is followed as discharges may have to be forwarded for verification which can take time, and in the absence of such verification the application cannot be processed.

2.2 Enquiries

- 2.2.1 Applicants may make enquiries about their application and when doing so, should ensure that the point on which information is sought is clearly stated. Enquiries should be addressed to:

Seagoing Examination and Mercantile Marine Office
Marine Department
3/F Harbour Building
38 Pier Road
Central
Hong Kong

Tel. No. : (852) 2852 4383
Fax No. : (852) 2541 6754
E-mail : sssem@mardep.gov.hk

2.3 Particulars of Sea Service

- 2.3.1 An applicant's eligibility for a certificate of proficiency will depend, amongst other factors, on the amount of sea service performed and upon the seagoing ranks in which the applicant has served. It is, therefore, imperative that the particulars which applicants enter on the application form are accurately stated.
- 2.3.2 The amount of sea service set down in the Determinations for the Certificate of Proficiency for Navigational Watch Ratings is the **absolute minimum** that can be accepted. Unless applicants can prove the full amount they will not be issued with a certificate.

2.4 Use of Information

- 2.4.1 Information required by the application form will be used by Marine Department for the process of application for and issue of certificate. This information may be divulged to other departments and agencies authorised to process the information for the mentioned purposes. Limited personal data of successful applicant may be used via the Marine Department's website for verification of the issued certificate of proficiency by any third parties.
- 2.4.2 Supply of information is obligatory. An applicant should ensure that all the information filled in the application form is accurate. Failure to do so may, besides subject to paragraph 2.5, result in an unsuccessful application.
- 2.4.3 For making correction and access to personal data after submission of application form, an applicant may contact the following officer:

Officer-in-charge
Marine Department
Seagoing Examination and Mercantile Marine Office
3/F Harbour Building
38 Pier Road
Central
Hong Kong

2.5 Fraud or Misrepresentation

- 2.5.1 Applicants are reminded that the Merchant Shipping (Seafarers) (Navigational Watch) Regulation (Cap.478AH) provides that any person who, in connection with an application for the issue of a certificate of proficiency:
- (a) makes a false pretence; or
 - (b) supplies false information,

knowing it to be false, or not believing it to be true, commits an offence and is liable, amongst other things, to a fine and to imprisonment.

2.6 Attempted Bribery

- 2.6.1 Any applicant who offers an advantage to any officer of the Marine Department shall be guilty of an offence under the Prevention of Bribery Ordinance and shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine and to imprisonment. Such an applicant will not be issued with a certificate for such a period as may be decided by the Director.

2.7 Quality Standards

- 2.7.1 The education and training courses which an applicant attends to satisfy the training requirements for the issue of a certificate of proficiency shall generally follow a quality standards system or an alternative system acceptable to the Director. A list of the approved training courses can be found at the Marine Department's website (https://www.mardep.gov.hk/en/pub_services/pdf/crt_course.pdf).

2.8 Issue of Certificates

- 2.8.1 Applicants who are successful in meeting all the requirements for the issue of a Certificate of Proficiency for Navigational Watch Ratings, will be issued with a certificate of proficiency. When the certificate is ready it will be forwarded by post to the applicant's address as given on the application form, unless the applicant wishes to make other arrangements.
- 2.8.2 To avoid unnecessary delays in the issue of certificates, it is important that applicants should inform the Marine Department promptly of any change to the address given on the application form.

2.9 Fees

- 2.9.1 Applicants for the certificate of proficiency will be required to pay the prescribe fee (presently the fee is NIL) before any steps are taken to verify their eligibility for the issue of the certificate.

2.10 Issue of Replacement Certificate

- 2.10.1 If a Certificate of Proficiency for Navigational Watch Ratings is lost, destroyed, damaged or defaced, the holder may apply to the Seagoing Examination and Mercantile Marine Office for a replacement certificate. A fee will be charged (presently the fee is HK\$ 155) for the replacement certificate unless the holder can show the certificate was lost as a result of shipwreck or fire on board ship. An applicant for a replacement certificate will be required to make a declaration to the Officer-in-charge of the Seagoing Examination and Mercantile Marine Office regarding the circumstances in which the certificate was lost. Upon the issue of a copy certificate, the certificate that was lost, destroyed, damaged or defaced ceases to be valid.

SECTION 3

SEA SERVICE

3.1 General

- 3.1.1 This section specifies provisions relating to qualifying sea service.
- 3.1.2 Except where otherwise specified, the qualifying sea service required for a Certificate of Proficiency for Navigational Watch Ratings is the service performed in ships which proceed to sea and which are actively engaged in commercial trading.
- 3.1.3 Qualifying sea service means time spent on board ship reckoned from the date of engagement to the date of discharge. Subject to verification, as and when necessary, certificates of discharge will be accepted as proof of sea service.
- 3.1.4 Proof of sea service for applicants serving on Hong Kong registered ships can be verified by the Mercantile Marine Office of Marine Department. Sea service on other ships must be confirmed by the Master(s) of the ship(s) concerned, or by the Consul or other recognized authority of the flag State. However, such confirmation will not necessarily be deemed sufficient.
- 3.1.5 Calculations of voyage length for the purpose of establishing sea service should be made in calendar months and days. When it happens that an applicant has signed off and signed on again on the same day, that day may only be counted once. To calculate total sea service, the length of each voyage should be added together in months and days. The total of days should then be divided by 30 to give months, and residual days. The months should then be added as the total months.

SECTION 4

QUALIFYING REQUIREMENTS

4.1 Certificate of Proficiency for Navigational Watch Ratings

4.1.1 To qualify for the issue of a Certificate of Proficiency for Navigational Watch Ratings in Hong Kong, an applicant must:

- (a) be a registered person;
- (b) be a rating;
- (c) be not less than 17 years of age;
- (d) have completed the on board training record for the issue of a Certificate of Proficiency for Navigational Watch Ratings;
- (e) have completed:
 - (i) approved seagoing service including not less than six months of training and experience, or
 - (ii) special training, either pre-sea or on board ship, including an approved period of seagoing service which shall not be less than two months; and
- (f) have met the standard of competence specified in section A-II/4 of the STCW Code (standard of competence is shown in the Appendix I).

4.1.2 The seagoing service, training and experience required by section 4.1.1(e)(i) and 4.1.1(e)(ii) must be associated with navigational watchkeeping functions and involve the performance of duties carried out under the direct supervision of the master, the officer in charge of the navigational watch or a qualified rating.

Certificate of Proficiency for Navigational Watch Ratings
(Regulation II/4)

Hold a valid medical fitness certificate

Have completed the on board training

Have seagoing service in deck department of not less than 2 months

Have seagoing service in deck department of not less than 6 months

Have completed an approved shore-based training course

- Not less than 17 years of age
- As a registered person
- As a rating

4.2 Medical Fitness Certificate

- 4.2.1 Proof of medical fitness is an essential requirement for the issue of any certificate of proficiency. Medical fitness may be proven by the production of a certificate of medical fitness issued not more than two years beforehand by an approved medical practitioner.
- 4.2.2 Applicants in Hong Kong may obtain from the Mercantile Marine Office a list of medical practitioners who are approved by the Director to issue medical fitness certificates. The list could also be downloaded from the Marine Department's website. (https://www.mardep.gov.hk/en/pub_services/pdf/regmp.pdf).

SECTION 5

ON BOARD TRAINING

5.1 On Board Training Record Book

- 5.1.1 Conditions stated in paragraph 4.1.1(d) requires rating to complete an on board training and is documented in an approved training record book. On board training programme including all the elements listed in paragraph 5.1.3 for navigational watch ratings and the record of the training conducted in accordance with such programme are acceptable to the Director as the approved ones. Such training record book can be one prepared by seafarer's companies or training institutes as well as one published by maritime organizations.
- 5.1.2 A rating with his on board training falls short of the required training elements will be required to compensate by additional seagoing service, training courses or assessment as determined by the Director.
- 5.1.3 With respect to the paragraph 2.3 of Regulation II/4 of the STCW Convention, the supervised on board training should at least cover the following elements:
- (a) Safety and Shipboard Familiarization
 - (i) Watchkeeping procedures and arrangements
 - (ii) Safety and emergency procedure
 - (iii) Environmental protection
 - (b) Steer the ship and also comply with helm orders in the English language
 - (i) Use of magnetic and gyrocompasses; helm orders and change-over from automatic pilot to hand steering and vice versa
 - (c) Keep a proper lookout by sight and hearing
 - (i) Responsibilities of a lookout, including reporting the approximate bearing of a sound signal, light or other object in degrees or points
 - (d) Contribute to monitoring and controlling a safe watch
 - (i) Demonstrate use of shipboard terms and definitions
 - (ii) Use of appropriate internal communication and alarm systems
 - (iii) Ability to understand orders and to communicate with the officer of the watch on matters relevant to watchkeeping duties; follow procedures for the relief, maintenance and handover of a watch; and interpret information required to maintain a safe watch
 - (iv) Practice of basic environmental protection procedures
 - (e) Operate emergency equipment and apply emergency procedures
 - (i) Knowledge of emergency duties and alarm signals
 - (ii) Knowledge of pyrotechnic distress signals; satellite EPIRBs and SARTs
 - (iii) Avoidance of false distress alerts and action to be taken in event of accidental activation
- 5.1.4 The training record book should also contain the following information:
- (a) Personal information of the candidate for certification, such as name, date of birth, residential address, seaman discharge book no. etc.

- (b) Company(ies) information which the candidate has been served such as company name, company address, service period for the particular training programme etc.
- (c) Ship(s) information which the candidate has been served such as ship's name, IMO Number, ship's type, ship's major particulars, engine particulars, lifesaving and firefighting equipment, cargo gears, navigational equipment etc.

APPENDIX I

STANDARDS OF COMPETENCE FOR RATINGS FORMING PART OF A NAVIGATIONAL WATCH

Function (1): Navigation at the Support Level

Competence (i): Steer the ship and also comply with helm orders in the English language

Content of Assessment	Criteria for Satisfactory Assessment
Use of magnetic and gyrocompasses Helm orders Changeover from automatic pilot to hand steering and vice versa	A steady course is steered within acceptable limits, having regard to the area of navigation and prevailing sea state. Alterations of course are smooth and controlled Communications are clear and concise at all times and orders are acknowledged in a seamanlike manner

Competence (ii): Keep a proper lookout by sight and hearing

Content of Assessment	Criteria for Satisfactory Assessment
Responsibilities of a lookout, including reporting the approximate bearing of a sound signal, light or other object in degrees or points	Sound signals, lights and other objects are promptly detected and their approximate bearing, in degrees or points, is reported to the officer of the watch

Competence (iii): Contribute to monitoring and controlling a safe watch

Content of Assessment	Criteria for Satisfactory Assessment
Shipboard terms and definitions Use of appropriate internal communication and alarm systems Ability to understand orders and to communicate with the officer of the watch on matters relevant to watchkeeping duties Procedures for the relief, maintenance and handover of a watch Information required to maintain a safe watch Basic environmental protection procedures	Communications are clear and concise and advice/clarification is sought from the officer on watch where watch information or instructions are not clearly understood Maintenance, handover and relief of the watch is in conformity with accepted practices and procedures

Competence (iv): Operate emergency equipment and apply emergency procedures

Content of Assessment	Criteria for Satisfactory Assessment
Knowledge of emergency duties and alarm signals	Initial action on becoming aware of an emergency or abnormal situation is in

Knowledge of pyrotechnic distress signals; satellite EPIRBs and SARTs

Avoidance of false distress alerts and action to be taken in event of accidental activation

conformity with established practices and procedures

Communications are clear and concise at all times and orders are acknowledged in a seamanlike manner