

MALTA MARITIME AUTHORITY

MERCHANT SHIPPING DIRECTORATE

*Notice to Shipowners, Ship Operators and Managers,
and Ship Masters and Officers*

This notice is a follow up to MSD Notice No. 19

MSD Notice No 30

**INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON
STANDARDS OF TRAINING, CERTIFICATION AND
WATCHKEEPING FOR SEAFARERS, 1978,
AS AMENDED IN 1995**

Watch Ratings Certification

The 1995 amendments to the *International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping, 1978 (STCW 95)* specify that all ratings forming part of a watch must be duly certificated as meeting the minimum standard of competence specified in the relative section *A-II/4 and A-III/4 of the STCW Code*.

The Merchant Shipping Directorate has formulated a *Provisional Watch Rating Certificate* as specified in MSD Notice No.19, to be utilised as part of the process for full certification. A copy of the Certificate is attached to this Notice. Further copies are available upon request from this Directorate.

Ratings forming part of a watch may be assessed by the master or the chief engineer, who shall complete the certificate as appropriate. On completion, a copy is to be forwarded to this Directorate. The Certificate is valid for not more than 6 months from the Date of issue, and is required to be carried on board at all times.

Before expiry of then *Provisional Watch Rating Certificate*, an application for a full certificate should be made to this Directorate either directly or through the operators. The master or chief engineer shall be responsible to ensure that rating are qualified as meeting the minimum standards of competence

specified in the relative sections *A-II/4 and A-III/4 of the STCW Code*. To provide further guidance a tabular format of the minimum standard of competence for rating forming part of a watch is included on the back of the Provisional Watch Rating certificate made available by this Directorate.

In order to qualify for a full watch rating certificate, a rating must be at least 16 years of age and must submit the following documents to this Directorate:

1. copy of the *Provisional Watch Rating Certificate*.
2. details of any training courses undertaken.
3. the appropriate fee.

On receipt and validation of these documents this Directorate shall record the details and issue a *Full Watch Rating Certificate* valid for five years from date of issue.

Seafarers already in possession of a recognised certificate as Able Seaman or Efficient Deck Hand also qualify for a *Full Watch Rating Certificate*.

Ratings already holders of *Full Watch Rating Certificates* issued by another Administration will be accepted by this Directorate for service on Maltese ships on the basis that the requirement for record keeping lies with the issuing Administration. Such personnel need not be issued with a *Watch Rating Certificate* by this Directorate, however, a copy of their certificates is to be forwarded to this Directorate for review and record purposes

Rest Periods and Watchkeeping Requirements

As specified in MSD Notice No. 19, companies are reminded to ensure that the provisions of STCW 95 on rest periods, including those in *Section A-VIII/1 of the Code*, have been implemented. *Regulation VIII/1 of the STCW 95* establishes mandatory rest periods for all Watchkeepers.

These provisions specify that :

- a. every person assigned duty as officer in charge of a navigational or engineering watch, or duty as a rating forming part of a navigational or engineering watch, must be provided with a minimum of 10 hours of rest in any 24-hour period;
- b. the hours of rest may be divided into not more than two periods, one of which must be at least 6 hours in length;

- c. these rest periods provisions need not be maintained in the case of an emergency, drill or other overriding operational condition (that is, circumstances in which essential shipboard work cannot be delayed for safety or environmental reasons, or could not reasonably have been anticipated at the commencement of the voyage.);
- d. the minimum 10 hours rest period may be reduced to not less than 6 consecutive hours under the following conditions: no reduction may extend beyond two days and not less than 70 hours of rest are provided each 7-day period.
- e. the minimum period of rest required may not be devoted to watchkeeping or other duties.

Masters should ensure that all watchkeeping personnel are aware of the requirements, principles, and guidance set out in *Sections A-VIII/2 and B-VIII/2 of the STCW Code*.

Watch schedules should be posted where they are easily accessible. The schedules must include each affected crew member and take into account the appropriate rest.

Merchant Shipping Directorate Valletta.

18 June 1998