



REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

Marine Notice

BUREAU OF MARITIME AFFAIRS

SEA-003
9/08

**TO: ALL SHIPOWNERS, OPERATORS, MASTERS AND OFFICERS OF
MERCHANT SHIPS, AGENTS AND RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATIONS**

SUBJECT: Approval of Maritime Training Center Courses and Programs

- References:**
- (a) **Maritime Regulation 10.325(3)**
 - (b) **International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, (STCW) 1978, as amended**
 - (c) **Publication RLM-118, Requirements for Merchant Marine Personnel Certification**
 - (d) **Marine Notice MAN-003 on Certification, Training and Rest Periods**
 - (e) **Marine Notice ISM-001 on International Safety Management (ISM) Code**

Supersedes: Marine Notice SEA-003 dated 4/05

PURPOSE:

This Notice provides policy guidance on Administration standards and procedures for the approval of maritime training courses and programs used in qualifying candidates for original and renewal certificates of competence, special qualification certification and certification by endorsement to STCW 1978, as amended, standards.

APPLICABILITY:

This Notice applies to Receiving/Filing Agents accepting and processing certification applications to which are attached certificates of completion from Maritime Training Centers, Maritime Training Centers seeking course and program approvals, and Recognized Organizations seeking authorization from the Administration to assess and certify Training Centers as Quality Registrars in its behalf.

REQUIREMENTS:

1.0 Important Dates

- 1.1 Receiving/Filing Agents and Maritime Training Centers are reminded that STCW 1978, as amended, training course or program certificates are limited in both their acceptance and validity. Previous course or program approvals to STCW 1978, as amended, standards are not acceptable for STCW certification and will no longer be accepted.

2.0 General STCW 1978, as amended, Standards

- 2.1 STCW 1978, as amended, requires that all maritime training maintained or accepted by the Office of the Deputy Commissioner of Maritime Affairs in order to give full and complete effect to the Convention and for the issuance and revalidation of certificates of competency must meet the mandatory minimum standards as specified in the amendments to the Annex of the Convention and the mandatory standards of Part A of the STCW Code to this Convention.
- 2.2 Therefore, each Maritime Training Center seeking acceptance of its training certificates of completion as evidence of compliance with the STCW Convention must be maintaining a program that is monitored by a certified Quality Standards System in accordance with STCW Reg. I/8, Code Section A-I/8, acceptable to the Office of the Deputy Commissioner or is accredited by a national government reported by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) as giving full and complete effect to the Convention, indicating that it is providing:
 - .1 course curricula which meet at a minimum the requirements of STCW Code to the equivalent of "model" courses developed by the IMO;
 - .2 sufficient training to refresh candidate's knowledge, understanding and proficiency in the areas required by the STCW Code;
 - .3 modern and well maintained facilities that accommodate the students in a safe and comfortable environment conducive to learning;
 - .4 visual aids for realism, including simulators where appropriate, which are modern, well maintained and sufficient for the number of students to be accommodated;
 - .5 individuals who are appropriately qualified to conduct training and assessment activities;
 - .6 an efficient and effective instructor/trainee/equipment ratio as to classroom and practical training and maintaining same as appropriate for the intended instruction;
 - .7 where appropriate, written or practical examinations in the course material to each student of such a degree of difficulty that a student who successfully completes them would pass, on first attempt, an examination prepared by the Republic of the Liberia; and
 - .8 record keeping on each written examination or, in the case of a practical test, reports on such testing taken by students with a record of each student's classroom attendance being maintained for at least 5 years after the end of each student's enrollment.
- 2.3 When a student successfully completes the course or courses, including the examinations and practical demonstration required, the training center must be issuing an appropriate course completion certificate in a form prescribed by the training center that is acceptable to the Administration.

- 2.4 At any time upon request by the Administration, the training center shall allow representatives of the Administration to:
- .1 inspect its facilities, equipment, and records, including scholastic records;
 - .2 conduct interviews and surveys of students to aid in course evaluation and improvement;
 - .3 assign personnel to observe or participate in the course of instruction; and
 - .4 supervise or administer the required examination or practical demonstrations.
- 2.5 No major changes in an approved curriculum may be made unless that change is approved in writing by the Administration.

3.0 Written Requests

- 3.1 Receiving/Filing Agents are instructed to advise any maritime training center desiring to have the certificates of course completion they plan to be issuing accepted by the Office of the Deputy Commissioner for STCW certification to submit a written request to the Administration for the courses or programs they wish to have approved by the Republic of Liberia pursuant to the STCW 1978, as amended, standards.
- 3.2 Written requests made by a Maritime Training Center directly to the Administration must be accompanied by the following information and materials:
- .1 a statement indicating the need for such approved training as mandated by international conventions, the STCW Code and as implemented by the Republic of Liberia;
 - .2 a list of the curricula including descriptions of and the number of classroom hours required in each subject area;
 - .3 a description of the facility and equipment;
 - .4 a list of instructors including the experience, background, and the qualifications of each instructor (each instructor must be certified as having completed a training course for instructors based on the IMO Model Course 6.09 or the equivalent);
 - .5 the number of students enrolled per course with instructor/trainee/equipment ratios;
 - .6 samples of course completion certification to be issued;
 - .7 documentation as to accreditation by a national government reported by the IMO as giving full and complete effect to the Convention; or
 - .8 documentation as to ISO 9001:2000 quality standard system certification, or equivalent, verifying compliance to STCW 1978, as amended, standards.

- 3.3 ALL SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION NOT SUBMITTED IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE MUST HAVE AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION ENCLOSED.
- 3.4 The Maritime Training Center shall make this submission directly to the Office of the Deputy Commissioner as prescribed above and section 5.0.

4.0 Review and Certification of Seafarer Training Facilities

- 4.1 The review of the training centers must be done in accordance with the minimum standards and procedures established by the Office of the Deputy Commissioner for the approval of maritime training courses and programs as specified in this Marine Notice, which must be taken into consideration during the preparation and performance of an STCW compliance assessment.
- 4.2 Each training course or program must be reviewed by the Quality Registrar to ensure compliance with the mandatory minimum standards of the STCW 1978, as amended, as specified in the Annex and Part A of the STCW 1978, as amended, Code to this Convention which shall be a part of the terms of reference for the quality system being used to monitor the training course or program being certified.
- 4.3 The Quality Registrar must submit an Audit Report to the Office of the Deputy Commissioner for each training center reviewed which includes the following:
- .1 Identifies the training center reviewed;
 - .2 Identifies the quality system auditors who made the document and onsite review of the training center providing verification of their qualifications;
 - .3 Identifies the quality system standards or terms of reference (e.g. ISO 9002 or equivalent, STCW, etc.) and the scope of the certification upon which the review was made.
 - .4 Specifies the Administration audit requirements which have been met;
 - .5 Specifies the inclusive dates of the audit performed;
 - .6 Specifies the courses reviewed and approved; and
 - .7 Provides a copy of the certification issued to the training center which identifies the quality system standard used and the scope of courses approved and the authority, i.e. Flag, under which the certificate has been issued.
- 4.4 The certification issued to the training center is to be valid for a period of not more than five (5) years. Annual surveillance audits must be conducted and the results made available to the Administration as deemed necessary. In cases where major non-conformities are raised and/or it should become necessary to withdraw certification, the Administration must be notified.

4.5 In addition to those qualification requirements already established by the Quality Registrar for its auditors, auditors should be in possession of Maritime Certificates of Competency or equivalent, which is pertinent to the field of knowledge under assessment.

5.0 Submissions from Maritime Training Centers and Recognized Organizations

All submissions are to be addressed to:

Liberian International Ship & Corporate Registry
8619 Westwood Center Dr., Suite 300
Vienna, VA 22182, USA
Tel: (703) 790-3434
Fax: (703) 790-5655