



Office of  
Deputy Commissioner  
of Maritime Affairs

# THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

BUREAU OF MARITIME AFFAIRS

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June 3, 2002

**Subj: COMPLIANCE WITH THE MINIMUM SAFE MANNING CERTIFICATE IN LIGHT OF THE STCW'78 AS AMENDED IN 1995**

Gentlemen,

Seafarers filling positions required by the Liberian Minimum Safe Manning Certificate shall comply with the requirements of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping of 1978, as amended in 1995 (STCW'95) as of February 1, 2002. This letter revises our January 30, 2002 letter and serves to explain the Liberian requirements for STCW'95 compliance.

## 1) Background:

- a. The vast majority of Liberian licenses, seamen's books and special qualifications are issued based on a seafarer having a national license or relevant seafarer's document meeting all of the STCW'95 requirements.
- b. Regulation I/10, Paragraph 5 of STCW'95 states that: "Notwithstanding the requirements of Regulation I/2, Paragraph 5, an Administration may, if circumstances require, allow a seafarer to serve in a capacity, ....., for a period not exceeding three months on board a ship entitled to fly its flag, while holding an appropriate and valid certificate issued by another Party for use on board that Party's ships, but which has not yet been endorsed so as to render it appropriate for service on board ships entitled to fly the flag of the Administration. Documentary proof shall be made readily available that application for an endorsement has been submitted to the Administration." A Certificate of Receipt of Application (CRA) or an application for a Liberian certificate dated and stamped with a filing agent's seal shall be considered documentary proof.
- c. Article X of the STCW'95 conference states in paragraph (3): "In exercising the control under paragraph (1), ....., the deficiencies..... if not corrected and it is determined that this fact poses a danger to persons, property or the environment, the party carrying out the control shall take steps to ensure the ship will not sail unless and until these requirements are met to the extent that the danger has been removed." And Paragraph (4): "When exercising control under this article, all possible efforts shall be made to avoid a ship being unduly delayed."

**2) The Deputy Commissioner of Maritime Affairs, in accordance with STCW'95 and Paragraph 292 of Liberian Maritime Law has determined that:**

- a. Seafarers holding valid National STCW'95 Certificates issued by a country recognized by Liberia may fill positions required by the Liberian Minimum Safe Manning Certificate (MSMC) for a period of 90 days.
- b. This allowance is granted only if the seafarer has submitted a complete application for a Liberian Certificate of Competency, or Special Qualification and Seaman's I.D. and Record Book.
- c. Said application, shall include a physical, photographs and a certified copy of the applicant's National Certificate.
- d. The individual seafarer may only fill a position equal to, or less than their National License or Certificate of Competency.
- e. The countries that Liberia has recognized as issuing valid licenses or certificates of competency are listed in Annex 8 of RLM 118 (copy attached).

**3) Specific STCW'95 requirements for Liberian flag vessels effective February 1, 2002:**

On board a Liberian flag vessel, crew filling the positions required by the MSMC must present evidence of meeting the following:

- a. Masters:
  - i) Liberian STCW'95 license, or
  - ii) A National STCW' 95 License with a CRA for a Liberian STCW'95 license.
- b. Other officers:
  - i) Liberian STCW'95 license, or
  - ii) A National STCW' 95 License with a CRA for a Liberian STCW'95 license, or
  - iii) A National STCW'95 License with a copy of an application for a Liberian STCW'95 license based upon a National STCW'95 license from a "White Listed" country, dated and stamped with a filing agent's seal.
- c. Ratings: Liberian Seaman's I.D. and Record Book with a training certificate or sticker showing Basic Training "including Personal Safety and Social Responsibilities," with other special qualification stickers showing certification as:
  - i) Tankerman, Ordinary Seaman, Oiler, or Able Seaman where applicable, and
  - ii) Survival Craft/Rescue Boat for Able Seaman only; or
  - iii) National Seaman's I.D. and Record Book or Certificate from a "White Listed" country as evidence of meeting the STCW'95 requirements with a copy of an application for a Liberian Seaman's I.D. and Record Book dated and stamped with a filing agent's seal.

**4) Masters without Liberian STCW'95 certificates:** Masters who sent a valid application to the Deputy Commissioner's Office (Seafarers Certification and Documentation Dept. at LISCR in Vienna, Virginia, USA) prior to assuming command, shall have a CRA. If they have not received a CRA, it should be corrected before the vessel sails.

**5) Seafarers without Liberian Seaman's I.D. and Record Book or STCW'95 certificates:**

Other officers and ratings who sent a valid application based on their valid National STCW certificate from a "White Listed" Country to the Deputy Commissioner's Office (Seafarers Certification and Documentation Dept. at LISCR in Vienna, Virginia, USA) may continue sailing in the capacity authorized by their National STCW'95 Certificates for 90 days from the date of application to the Deputy Commissioner.

**6) Information regarding a Liberian License or Seafarer's ID and Record Book and Special Qualifications may be checked by one of the following methods:**

- a. The seafarer's Liberian certification record can be verified through the internet by visiting [www.liscr.com/seafarerssearch](http://www.liscr.com/seafarerssearch) and entering the seafarer's name, and date of birth as indicated in the spaces provided. This is the preferred method as additional telephone calls, faxes and e-mails asking for updates will slow down the processing of all applications.
- b. The owner, operator or agent may contact Deputy Commissioner of Maritime Affairs (ask for the Seafarers Certification and Documentation Dept. at LISCR in Vienna, Virginia, USA) at:
  - i) Telephone: 703-790-3434
  - ii) Fax: 703-790-5655.
- c. Nautical inspectors and Port State Inspectors may contact Deputy Commissioner of Maritime Affairs (ask for the Safety Dept. at LISCR in Vienna, Virginia, USA) at the same numbers listed in b) above.

**7) Filing or Manning Agents shall:**

- a. Only assign crew to Liberian Ships who have valid Liberian or National STCW'95 certificates, and
- b. If the seafarer does not have a valid Liberian STCW'95 certificate the filing/manning agent shall make sure that in addition to the seafarer having a valid National STCW'95 Certificate that the crewman has:
  - i) Completed an application,
  - ii) A valid physical, and
  - iii) All of the other required documentation is submitted with the application.

**8) Owner or operators:** The owner, managing operator and owner's agents are strongly encouraged to make certain their filling or manning agents only send crewmen who have valid Liberian Licenses, Special Qualifications and Seaman's I.D. and Record Books to Liberian vessels. Should a crewman not have the required Liberian License or Special Qualification and Seaman's I.D. and Record Book, or cannot present evidence that they have a valid National License and submitted an application for a Liberian Certificate, the Port State may detain the vessel in accordance with Article X of STCW'95. This is especially true if the crew required by the Minimum Safe Manning Certificate cannot present evidence that they have valid Liberian STCW'95 Certificates of Competency or STCW'95 Certificates recognized by Liberia.

**9) The Deputy Commissioner's Office will:**

- a. Direct nautical inspectors to issue a Contravention Citation when it is discovered during an annual safety inspection that crewmen required by the minimum Safe Manning Certificate do not have the Required Liberian Certificate of Competency, Special Qualification or Seaman's I.D. and Record Book. The Contravention will list the position occupied by any crewmember who does not have a valid Liberian STCW'95 License, Special Qualification or Seaman's I.D. and Record Book.
- b. Issue the vessel a dispensation if it can be shown that the remaining crew have adequate certification and are sufficient to safely navigate the vessel.
- c. Detain the vessel if the Master does not have a Liberian STCW'95 Master's license or CRA, and the other officers and/or crew cannot present evidence that they have submitted an application showing that they have met the requisite STCW'95 training requirements.

This supercedes our STCW'95 Compliance letter dated January 30, 2002 and this revised policy letter will remain in effect unless extended or amended by the Deputy Commissioner.

Sincerely,

**S**

Captain John P. DeLeonardis  
Deputy Commissioner  
Maritime Affairs  
Republic of Liberia

Attachments: (1) Annex 8