



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
MARITIME INDUSTRY AUTHORITY

MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. SC-2023- 03

Series of 2023

TO : ALL SEAFARERS, MARITIME HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS (MHEIs), MARITIME TRAINING INSTITUTIONS (MTIs), ASSESSMENT CENTERS (ACs), SHIPPING COMPANIES, MANNING AGENCIES, DOH-ACCREDITED MEDICAL FACILITIES FOR SEAFARERS, MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS AND OTHER MARITIME INDUSTRY STAKEHOLDERS

SUBJECT : REVISED MANDATORY MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF COMPETENCE AND CERTIFICATION OF RATINGS FORMING PART OF A NAVIGATIONAL WATCH (RFPNW) AND RATINGS AS ABLE SEAFARER DECK UNDER REGULATIONS II/4 AND II/5, RESPECTIVELY, OF THE STCW CONVENTION, 1978, AS AMENDED

Pursuant to Presidential Decree (PD) No. 474, Republic Act (RA) No. 10635 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) and subsequent amendments thereto, the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW Convention), 1978, as amended, Republic Act No. 11032 otherwise known as "The Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery Act of 2018", and Republic Act No. 10173 also known as the "Data Privacy Act of 2012", the following rules and requirements are hereby adopted and promulgated:

**Article I
OBJECTIVE**

Section 1. The objective of this Circular is to ensure full compliance with the requirements of Chapter II, Regulations II/4 and II/5 of the STCW Convention, 1978, as amended by prescribing the rules, procedures and mandatory minimum requirements for the assessment of competence and certification of *Ratings Forming Part of a Navigational Watch (RFPNW)* and *Ratings as Able Seafarer Deck* serving on a seagoing ship of 500 gross tonnage or more.

This revision is part of the continual improvement of the policies and procedures in the assessment of competence and certification systems and its harmonization with the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) online system and its subsequent amendments, which further strengthens the MARINA's compliance with the STCW Convention, 1978, as amended.

Article II COVERAGE

Section 2. This Circular shall apply to all candidates for the assessment of competence and certification of *Ratings Forming Part of a Navigational Watch (RFPNW)* and *Ratings as Able Seafarer Deck* on a seagoing ship of 500 gross tonnage or more.

Seafarers of any nationality who have completed the approved maritime education and training in the Philippines, and passed the assessment of competence and have met the requirements for certification under this Circular may also apply for a Certificate of Proficiency (COP) under Regulations II/4 and II/5 of the STCW Convention, 1978, as amended.

Article III DEFINITION OF TERMS

Section 3. For purposes of this Circular, the terms below shall be defined as follows:

1. **Administration** – means the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA);
2. **Assessment Center (AC)** – refers to an institution or entity duly accredited by the Administration to conduct practical assessment of competence required under this Circular;
3. **Assessment of Competence** – refers to the process of collecting evidence through practical assessment of the knowledge, understanding and proficiency, gained from any of the following: approved education and training, approved training ship experience, approved laboratory equipment training, and making judgments on whether competency has been achieved to confirm that a candidate can perform the standards in the relevant STCW *table of competence*;
4. **BSMT** – means the Bachelor of Science in Marine Transportation program;
5. **Candidate** - refers to a person who intends to apply and take the assessment of competence and certification under this Circular;
6. **Certificate of Passing the Practical Assessment** – refers to the document issued by the Assessment Center to the candidate after passing the practical assessment;
7. **Certificate of Proficiency (COP)** – means a certificate stating that the relevant requirements of training, competencies and/or seagoing service under the STCW Convention, 1978, as amended had been met;
8. **Competency Assessor**– refers to a person duly qualified and accredited by the Administration to conduct the assessment of competence of a candidate for certification under the STCW Convention, 1978, as amended;

9. **Competency Mapping** – means the establishment of the conditions under what method/s of assessment will be used, the assessment outcome the candidate needs to accomplish, and the performance standards against which the performance criteria is measured;
10. **Function** – means a group of tasks, duties and responsibilities, as specified in the STCW Code, necessary for the ship's operations, safety of life at sea and protection of the marine environment;
11. **Laboratory Tools/Equipment** – refers to the actual tools or equipment or parts thereof used as an aid in the conduct of practical assessment of competence;
12. **MARINA Online System** – means the system (e.g. MISMO system) which is a digital platform used for all transactions of seafarers and MARINA stakeholders relative to the assessment of competence and certification of seafarers, among others. It aims to facilitate and streamline the documentation processes and requirements;
13. **Party** – means a State for which the STCW Convention, 1978, as amended, has been enforced;
14. **Practical Assessment** – refers to the method of assessment of competence with the aid of laboratory tools, equipment and/or simulator to assess the ability of the candidate by performing the required task/s prescribed by the Administration to demonstrate a particular level of competence;
15. **Practical Assessment Scenario** – refers to an assessment situation which provide detailed conditions, events or incidents that may or may have occurred on board ships and allows the candidate to demonstrate his/her ability to perform a task based on the required competence and the established performance criteria and standards;
16. **Ratings as Able Seafarer Deck** – means a *Rating* certified in accordance with the provisions of Regulation II/5 under the STCW Convention, 1978, as amended and is authorized to perform the tasks prescribed in Table A-II/5 of the STCW Code, as amended;
17. **Ratings Forming Part of a Navigational Watch (RFPNW)** – means a *Rating* certified in accordance with the provisions of Regulation II/4 under the STCW Convention, 1978, as amended and is authorized to perform the tasks prescribed in Table A-II/4 of the STCW Code, as amended;
18. **Re-sit** - means that the candidate has to repeat the practical assessment as a result of an unsuccessful passing of the previous assessment;
19. **Remedial Assessment** – refers to the first *re-sit* wherein the candidate shall be required to take a different set of practical assessment scenario where the candidate had failed;

- 20. Removal Assessment** – refers to the second *re-sit* wherein the candidate shall be required to take a different set of practical assessment scenario where the candidate had failed;
- 21. Retake** – refers to the third *re-sit* wherein the candidate shall be required to take the entire practical assessment scenario;
- 22. Seagoing service** – means service on board ship relevant to the issuance of a certificate or other qualifications; and
- 23. Standard of Competence** – refers to the minimum proficiency, as listed in Column 1 of the STCW Competency Table A-II/4 and II/5 which a seafarer must be able to demonstrate to be entitled to certification, to the satisfaction of the Administration for certification as a rating.

Article IV GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 4. The assessment of competence and issuance of COP under this Circular shall be in accordance with Regulations II/4 and II/5 and the relevant provisions of Regulations I/2 and I/9 of the STCW Convention, 1978, as amended.

Section 5. The candidates shall be required to perform and/or demonstrate the competencies of the functions at the support level, as specified in Column 1 of Tables A-II/4 and II/5 of the STCW Code, as applicable.

Section 6. The approved education or training shall meet the knowledge, understanding and proficiency required of a *RFPNW* and *Ratings as Able Seafarer Deck* serving on a seagoing ship of 500 gross tonnage or more in accordance with Column 2 of Tables A-II/4 and II/5 of the STCW Code, respectively.

Section 7. Relative to the seafarer-ratings mentioned in Section 6, the evidence of having achieved the required standards of competence in accordance with the methods for demonstrating competence and the criteria for evaluating competence shall be in accordance with Columns 3 and 4 of Tables A-II/4 and II/5 of the STCW Code, as amended.

Section 8. For purposes of this Circular, the Administration shall implement the assessment of competence using laboratory tools, equipment and/or simulator as the methods of practical assessment guided by the assessment scenarios for functions and the corresponding competence to be assessed.

Section 9. The practical assessment shall be designed and developed in accordance with the criteria for evaluating competence as provided in Column 4 of the particular table of competence under the STCW Code and the Competency Mapping prepared and duly approved by the Administration.

Section 10. The scenarios for practical assessment shall be developed and approved by the Administration prior to its implementation. This process shall be conducted and

documented by the MARINA Board of Deck Ratings (BODRA) in accordance with its relevant Quality Management System (QMS) processes and procedures.

As part of the continual improvement process, the practical assessment scenarios shall be reviewed, revised or updated at an interval set by the Administration under its QMS or as deemed necessary.

Section 11. The practical assessment shall be conducted by the MARINA accredited Assessment Centers (ACs) and MARINA accredited Competency Assessor/s under the supervision and authority of the Administration.

Section 12. The STCW mandatory education and training course/s required for the assessment of competence and issuance of COP under this Circular shall be taken **ONLY** from schools and/or Maritime Training Institutions (MTIs) offering accredited programs and training courses, respectively.

Section 13. MTIs or Maritime Higher Education Institutions (MHEIs) or schools offering accredited programs for Ratings that are at the same time accredited as ACs are prohibited from conducting practical assessment/s to their own trainees/students or graduates for purposes of qualifying for the issuance of any certificate mandated under this circular.

Section 14. Every seafarer applying for the assessment of competence and issuance of COP under the relevant provisions of Chapter II of the STCW Convention, 1978, as amended, shall comply with the following general requirements:

1. Proof of identity;
2. Must meet the minimum age requirement as specified in Article V of this Circular;
3. Must meet the standards of Medical Fitness prescribed under Regulation I/9 and conducted by the accredited medical practitioners of the Department of Health (DOH); and
4. Must meet the standards of competence specified in Sections A-II/4 and II/5.

In circumstances where the submitted documents need further verification, seafarer-applicant may be required to present supporting documents during the evaluation of his/her application for certification under this Circular.

Section 15. The provisions of Republic Act No. 10173, otherwise known as the "Data Privacy Act of 2012", providing for the protection of confidentiality, preservation of the integrity and promotion of the availability of data authorized use, shall apply.

Article V SPECIFIC PROVISIONS

Section 16. Every candidate applying for the issuance of COP under this Circular shall comply with the specific requirements, as follows:

1. Regulation II/4 – Ratings Forming Part of a Navigational Watch on seagoing ships of 500 gross tonnage or more

- 1.1 Be not less than 18 years of age;
 - 1.2 Has a valid Medical Certificate from DOH-accredited medical hospital or clinic prescribed under Regulation I/9 and conducted by the accredited medical practitioners of the Department of Health (DOH);
 - 1.3 Have completed the special training, either *pre-sea* or *on board ship*, approved by the Administration, including seagoing service of not less than two (2) months which shall 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. Special training could be any of the following:
 - i. Approved training for Ratings Forming Part of a Navigational Watch leading to a certificate of completion; or
 - ii. Completed Classroom Instruction (CCI) in BSMT; or
 - iii. Completed the Enhanced Support Level Program for Marine Deck (ESLPMD) which shall only be acceptable until 31 December 2025; or
 - iv. Senior High School (SHS) TVL Maritime Track in an accredited school;
- and
- 1.4 Meet the standards of competence specified in Section A-II/4 of the STCW Code by passing the MARINA prescribed assessment of competence for Ratings Forming Part of a Navigational Watch on a seagoing ship of 500 gross tonnage or more.

2. Regulation II/5 – Ratings as Able Seafarer Deck on seagoing ships of 500 gross tonnage or more

- 2.1 Be not less than 18 years of age;
- 2.2 Has a valid Medical Certificate from DOH-accredited medical hospital or clinic prescribed under Regulation I/9 and conducted by the accredited medical practitioners of the Department of Health (DOH);
- 2.3 Have met the requirements for certification as RFPNW on a seagoing ship of 500 gross tonnage or more;
- 2.4 While qualified to serve as a RFPNW on a seagoing ship of 500 gross tonnage or more, the candidate for certification shall have approved seagoing service in the deck department of:

- a) not less than eighteen (18) months; or
- b) not less than twelve (12) months and has completed an approved training or education in any of the following:
 - i. Ratings as Able Seafarer Deck with a certificate of training completion from an accredited maritime training institution; or
 - ii. Completed the approved Bachelor of Science in Marine Transportation (BSMT) program; or
 - iii. Completed Classroom Instruction (CCI) in BSMT and the following modules in *Ratings as Able Seafarer Deck* course:
 - Module 4:** Contribute to the safe operation of deck equipment and machinery;
 - Module 5:** Apply occupational health and safety precautions; and
 - Module 8:** Contribute to shipboard maintenance and repair; or
 - iv. Completed the Enhanced Support Level Program for Marine Deck (ESLPMD) which shall only be acceptable until 31 December 2025 and shall be required to submit completion of **Module 8:** Contribute in shipboard maintenance and repair in *Ratings as Able Seafarer Deck* course;

2.5 Meet the standard of competence specified in Section A-VI/2-1 for Survival Craft and Rescue Boats (SCRB) of the STCW Code; and

2.6 Meet the standards of competence specified in Section A-II/5 of the STCW Code by passing the MARINA prescribed assessment of competence for Ratings as Able Seafarer Deck on a seagoing ship of 500 gross tonnage or more.

Section 17. Only candidates who have met the required education and/or training, sea service and medical fitness under this Circular shall be qualified to undergo practical assessment. The documentary requirements for the practical assessment and issuance of the COP is attached hereto as *Annex A*.

Section 18. A candidate shall be considered to have passed the practical assessment if he/she obtained a score of not less than 70% in each scenario. Otherwise, the following shall apply:

1. A candidate who failed in a specific scenario shall be required to take a *remedial* or *removal* assessment, as necessary, within a period of twelve (12) months from the date of the initial practical assessment;
2. A candidate who failed the *removal* assessment shall be required to retake the entire practical assessment within a period of twelve (12) months from the date of the initial practical assessment;

3. A candidate who failed the *retake* assessment shall be required to undergo RFPNW or Ratings as Able Seafarer Deck Courses, as appropriate, before he/she is allowed to re-apply for the practical assessment; and
4. A candidate who failed to take or pass the practical assessment within twelve (12) months from the initial date of assessment shall be required to re-apply for practical assessment.

Section 19. A candidate who successfully passed the practical assessment shall be issued a *Certificate of Passing the Practical Assessment* and shall be qualified for the issuance of COP.

Section 20. Applications for assessment of competence and certification of *RFPNW* and *Ratings as Able Seafarer Deck* shall be filed online by the seafarer through the MARINA online system as detailed in the attached *Annex B*.

Article VI EXPEDITE PROCESSING

Section 21. Manning/Crewing Agencies or Shipping Companies shall be allowed to file an expedite processing of application for the issuance of COP of their seafarers in circumstances where there is a need for an immediate embarkation, subject to the approval by the Administration. Further, stringent verification of requirements listed in the succeeding section shall be applied.

Section 22. Applications for expedite processing shall be filed by the seafarer and endorsed by his/her Manning/Crewing Agency or Shipping Company. The applicant shall comply with the following additional documentary requirements and have it uploaded to the MARINA online system account of the Seafarer:

1. Original letter request from the manning/crewing agency or shipping company duly signed by its authorized official/s and must bear the official logo of the company with a dry seal;
2. Certified True Copy stamped flight details;
3. Original or Certified True Copy Stamped *Overseas Employment Certificate* (OEC) from the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA); and
4. Original or Certified True Copy Stamped Contract of Employment duly approved by the POEA.

Article VII REPLACEMENT OF COP

Section 23. Holders of COPs issued prior to the date of effectivity of the MARINA online system which was lost, damaged or with erroneous information may apply for its replacement through the MARINA online system and shall comply with the following requirements:

1. Duly notarized affidavit stating the circumstances of the loss or damage of the previously issued hard copy/ies of the STCW Certificates; or duly notarized affidavit stating the circumstances of the erroneous information in the COP;
2. Picture of the damaged original COP (*for damaged or for correction of name, middle name, last name or date of birth*) or marriage contract for married women applying for change of last name;
3. First page of Passport or Seafarer's Identity Document (SID); and
4. Colored 2x2 inches ID picture in white polo with collar, white background and taken within the last six (6) months, with proper shoulder board appropriate to the rank with no name tag, frontal pose, showing full face, expressions should be neutral with both eyes open and mouth closed, and no hair covering the eyes. Moreover, heavy make-up and lip color must be avoided, and wearing of eyeglasses, contact lenses and other accessories are likewise not allowed.

Scanned copies of the foregoing documents shall all be uploaded in the MARINA online system.

A digital certificate will be re-issued upon compliance with the aforementioned requirements and as set forth under this Circular.

Article VIII VALIDITY OF COP

Section 24. In accordance with the STCW Convention, 1978, as amended, the COP issued under this Circular has no expiration, thus, is **NOT** subject to revalidation. This is without prejudice to the imposition of suspension or revocation of certificates following the grounds provided under **Article XII** of this Circular.

Article IX FORMAT OF COP

Section 25. The COP format shall contain the information provided in Section B-I/2 Paragraph 5 of the STCW Code, as amended.

Article X VERIFICATION OF COP

Section 26. COP issued under this Circular can be verified through the QR code indicated therein and/or the verification portal available in the MARINA online system, i.e. <https://online-appointment.marina.gov.ph/verify-id-certificate>.

Article XI
FEES AND OTHER CHARGES

Section 27. Application for the issuance of Application Number for the assessment of competence is free of charge. On the other hand, applicants for COP under this Circular shall pay the corresponding fees and other charges as indicated in MARINA Circular No. SC-2022-02 and its subsequent amendments, through the MARINA Authorized Payment Center.

Article XII
PENALTY CLAUSE

Section 28. Any violation of the provisions of this Circular and other related MARINA issuances shall be governed and sanctioned by the provisions of the Implementing Rules and Regulations of R.A. 10635 and/or MARINA Circular No. 2013-05, including any amendments or addendum thereof as maybe promulgated by the Administration.

Section 29. In case the seafarer's COP has been suspended/revoked, he/she may apply for a new certificate upon issuance of the Legal Clearance by the Administration.

Article XIII
REPEALING CLAUSE

Section 30. The STCW Circular No. 2017-06, MARINA Memorandum Circular No. SC-2022-06 and any other rules and regulations which are contrary to or inconsistent with the provisions herein are hereby repealed upon effectivity of this Circular.

Article XIV
TRANSITORY PROVISIONS

Section 31. Upon effectivity of this Circular, applications for the assessment of competence and COP for Ratings Forming Part of a Navigational Watch (RFPNW) and Ratings as Able Seafarer Deck serving on a seagoing ship 500 gross tonnage or more shall be in accordance with this Circular. COPs issued prior to the effectivity of this Circular shall not be affected and shall remain valid.

Article XV
SEPARABILITY CLAUSE

Section 32. If any provision or part of this Circular is declared by any competent authority to be invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions or parts hereof shall remain in full force and in effect and shall continue to be valid and effective.

**Article XVI
EFFECTIVITY**

Section 33. This Memorandum Circular shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its publication in a newspaper of General Circulation and submission to the Office of the National Administrative Register (ONAR).

Done in Manila, Philippines on JAN 20 2024.

BY THE AUTHORITY OF THE BOARD:


SONIA B. MALALUAN
Administrator

SECRETARY'S CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that **MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. SC-2023-03** was approved by the MARINA Board during its 302nd Regular Meeting on DEC 14 2023


ATTY. SHARON L. DE CHAVEZ-ALEDO
Corporate Board Secretary

Date of Publication : 01 February 2024
Published in : Business Mirror
Date of submission to ONAR : _____