

Republic of the Marshall Islands

MARITIME ADMINISTRATOR

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MARINE SAFETY ADVISORY No. 15-19

To: Owners/Operators, Masters, Nautical Inspectors, Recognized Organizations

Subject: CLARIFICATIONS TO CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR SEAFARERS OPERATING ON RMI SHIPS IN POLAR WATERS

Date: 09 May 2019

This Marine Safety Advisory (MSA) supersedes MSA No. 09-19. It has been revised to include §5.2, *Regulations*.

1.0 PURPOSE

In accordance with the *International Code for Ships Operating in Polar Water* (Polar Code), and subsequent amendments to the *International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers* (STCW), the Administrator requires deck officers on RMI-flagged vessels operating in Polar waters to be Polar certificated. The Administrator will evaluate qualifications, training, and seagoing service on a case-by-case basis. These requirements are contained in the *RMI Seafarer Certification Requirements* ([MI-118](#)).

2.0 APPLICABILITY AND IMPLEMENTATION

The Polar Code applies to all RMI-flagged vessels operating in Polar waters on or after **01 January 2017**, as provided in RMI Marine Notice [2-011-52](#). This MSA contains the requirements the Administrator will implement for Deck Officers who are assigned to RMI-flagged ships to which the Polar code applies.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 **Antarctic area** means the sea area as defined in the *International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea* (SOLAS) XIV/1.2 and in the *International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships* (MARPOL) Annexes I/1.11.7, II/13.8.1, IV/17.2, and V/1.14.7.
- 3.2 **Approved seagoing service** means service in Polar waters that is approved by the Administrator as acceptable for evaluating Polar water qualifications.
- 3.3 **Approved training** means training received at a facility whose course has been approved by the administration of a nation on the International Maritime Organization (IMO) White list as compliant with STCW regulations.

This MSA expires one (1) year after its issuance, unless otherwise noted, extended, superseded, or revoked.

- 3.4 **Arctic area waters** means those waters as defined in SOLAS Chapter XIV/1.3.
- 3.5 **Deck Officer** means a Master, Chief Mate, or Officer in Charge of a Navigation Watch (OICNW).
- 3.6 **Equivalent approved seagoing service** means equivalent service in other waters that is approved by the Administrator as acceptable for evaluating Polar water qualifications.
- 3.7 **Open water** means a large area of freely navigable water in which sea ice is present in concentrations less than one-tenth (1/10) and no ice of land origin is present.¹
- 3.8 **Polar waters** means Arctic area waters and/or the Antarctic area.
- 3.9 **Other waters** means waters containing ice that are not considered to be either Polar waters or open waters.

4.0 TRAINING OF OFFICERS

- 4.1 Until **01 July 2020**, the Administrator will accept evidence of training in accordance with the guidance from B-V/g of the STCW Code (STCW Convention Regulation V/4, paragraphs 6 and 7) from those Deck Officers who started their seagoing careers prior to **01 July 2018**.
- 4.2 After **01 July 2018**, the Administrator will require all other Deck Officers on board RMI-ships operating in Polar waters to be qualified in accordance with STCW Convention Regulation V/4 and meet the standards of competence for training found in the STCW Code Section A-V/4, paragraphs 1-5, and Tables A-V/4-1 and A-V/4-2 for the ships and ice conditions described in part I-A of Chapter 12 of the Polar Code.
- 4.3 In addition, Chapter 12 of the Polar Code and the Administrator requires every crew member of ships with a Polar Ship Certificate to be familiarized with the procedures and equipment contained or referenced in the Polar Waters Operation Manual (PWOM) that are relevant to their assigned duties. See RMI Marine Notice [2-011-52](#) for more information.

5.0 REQUIREMENTS FOR QUALIFICATION

5.1 Mandatory minimum requirements for the training and qualifications of Deck Officers on ships operating in Polar waters beginning 01 July 2018.

- 5.1.1 Deck Officers on ships operating in Polar waters shall hold a certificate in basic training for ships operating in Polar waters, as required by the Polar Code.

- .1 Every candidate for a certificate in basic training for ships operating in Polar waters shall have completed an approved basic training for ships operating in Polar waters

¹ Refer to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) [Sea Ice Nomenclature](#).

and meet the standard of competence specified in section A-V/4, paragraph 1, of the STCW Code.

5.1.2 Masters and chief mates on ships operating in Polar waters, shall hold a certificate in advanced training for ships operating in Polar waters, as required by the Polar Code.

- .1 Every candidate for a certificate in advanced training for ships operating in Polar waters shall:
 - a. meet the requirements for certification in basic training for ships in Polar waters;
 - b. have at least two months of approved seagoing service in the deck department, at management level or while performing watchkeeping duties at the operational level, within Polar waters or other equivalent approved seagoing service; and
 - c. have completed approved advanced training for ships operating in Polar waters and meet the standard of competence specified in section A-V/4, paragraph 2 of the STCW Code.

5.2 Regulations

In order to meet the requirement(s) of §5.1 above while operating in polar waters; masters, chief mates and officers in charge of a navigational watch shall be qualified in accordance with Chapter V of the STCW Convention as follows:

Ice Conditions	Tankers	Passenger Vessels	All other vessels
Ice Free	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Open Waters	Basic Training for master, chief mate and OICNW's	Basic Training for master, chief mate and OICNW's	Not applicable
Other Waters	Advanced Training for master and chief mate. Basic Training for master, chief mate and OICNW's	Advanced Training for master and chief mate. Basic Training for master, chief mate and OICNW's	Advanced Training for master and chief mate. Basic Training for master, chief mate and OICNW's

5.3 Transitional provisions, 01 July 2018 - 01 July 2020

5.3.1 The Administrator will require evidence for qualifications in Polar water navigation to be submitted with applications during the transition period beginning **01 July 2018** in accordance with the STCW Convention Regulation V/4, paragraphs 2, 4, 6, and 7, as follows:

5.3.2 Until **01 July 2020**, Deck Officers who commenced approved seagoing service in Polar waters prior to **01 July 2018** shall be able to establish that they meet the requirements of §5.1.1 above by:

- .1 having completed approved seagoing service on board a ship operating in Polar waters or equivalent approved seagoing service, performing duties in the deck department at the operational or management level, for a period of at least three months in total during the preceding five years; or
- .2 having successfully completed a training course meeting the training guidance established by the Organization for ships operating in Polar waters in accordance with section B-V/g of the STCW Code.

5.3.3 Until **01 July 2020**, Masters and Chief Mates who commenced approved seagoing service in Polar waters prior to **01 July 2018**, shall be able to establish that they meet the requirements of §5.1.2 above by:

- .1 having completed approved seagoing service on board a ship operating in Polar waters or equivalent approved seagoing service, performing duties in the deck department at management level, for a period of at least three months in total during the preceding five years; or
- .2 having successfully completed a training course meeting the training guidance established by the IMO for ships operating in Polar waters in accordance with section B-V/g of the STCW Code and having completed approved seagoing service on board a ship operating in Polar waters or equivalent approved seagoing service, performing duties in the deck department at the management level, for a period of at least two months in total during the preceding five years.

6.0 CERTIFICATION

Deck Officers who have been evaluated as qualified will receive a notation on their Officer's Certificate that indicates they are qualified for Polar water service. A separate certificate will not be issued.