



**MARITIME AND PORT AUTHORITY OF
SINGAPORE
SHIPPING CIRCULAR TO SHIPOWNERS
NO. 13 OF 2013**

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Applicable to: This circular should be brought to the attention of all seafarers, medical practitioners conducting medical examination and issuing seafarers' medical certificates and owners, managers and anyone who engages the services of seafarers onboard Singapore ships.

GUIDELINES ON THE MEDICAL EXAMINATION OF SEAFARERS

1 The 2010 Manila amendments to the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping of Seafarers, 1978 (STCW Convention) and STCW Code came into force on the 1 Jan 2012. The amendments included revision of standards of medical fitness for seafarers.

2 IMO, working together with the International Labour Organisation, has developed a set of guidelines on the medical examination and certification of seafarers to assist Parties to the convention to uniformly implement the medical requirements. Singapore is a party to STCW Convention, 1978. MPA accepts these guidelines as our national requirements for medical examination of seafarers and these requirements will come into force on 20 Aug 2013. IMO's circular STCW.7/Circular 19 on the guidelines on the medical examination and certification of seafarers is attached as Annex A.

Recognition of Medical Practitioners

3 MPA will accept valid medical certificate issued to seafarers by the following medical practitioners:

- a. Registered medical practitioners licensed to practice in Singapore and familiar with the guidelines on the medical examination and certification of seafarers. The list of registered medical practitioners in Singapore is given in the website <http://www.healthprofessionals.gov.sg>; or

- b. A medical practitioner recognised by a STCW State Party on the “STCW White List” (see IMO document MSC.1/Circ.1163/Rev.4 dated 8 June 2009, as updated from time to time); or
- c. A medical practitioner recognised by a MLC State Party and familiar with the guidelines on the medical examination and certification of seafarers; or
- d. Any other medical practitioner whose medical qualifications are accepted by the Director.

4 Part 3 of the guidelines on the medical examination and certification of seafarers provides the necessary information needed in a medical assessment and the medical certificate to be issued to seafarers. Sample formats for the “Record of Medical Examinations of Seafarer” and “Seafarer Medical Certificate” are attached in Annex B and Annex C respectively.

Medical Certificates

5 Validity. Medical certificates issued to seafarers shall be valid for not more than 2 years or not more than 1 year in the case of a seafarer under the age of 18 years. If a medical certificate expired in the course of a voyage, then the medical certificate shall remain valid until the next port of call.

6 To facilitate a smooth transition to the new medical certificates to be issued to seafarers, MPA will continue to accept medical certificates issued to seafarers under the 1995 amendments to the STCW Convention until 19 Aug 2015, or 19 Aug 2014 for seafarer under the age of 18 years at the point of issue.

7 Categories of Medical Certificates. Three categories of medical certificate may be issued:

- a. Able to perform all duties worldwide within designated department (unlimited).
- b. Able to perform some but not all routine and emergency duties or to work in limited area (e.g. within 30 miles from a port) (L - limited duration or R - limited job scope).
- c. Incompatible with the reliable performance of routine and emergency duties safely or effectively (Temporary or Permanent - unfit for sea service).

8 A seafarers who has been refused a medical certificate or has a limitation imposed in his certificate, could appeal to Director of Marine for a review by another independent medical practitioner.

9 Singapore is also a party to the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC 2006) and MLC 2006 will come into force on 20 Aug 2013. It will require every seafarer working onboard to hold a valid medical certificate. A medical

certificate issued in accordance with the requirements of the 2010 Manila amendments to STCW Convention, 1978, will also meet the requirements of MLC 2006.

10 Ship managers and masters should ensure that seafarers are only deployed to perform duties for which they are medically fit. For example, only seafarers who are fit for the deck department - (i.e. comply with requirements for eye-sight, colour vision and hearing) should be permitted to do bridge watch keeping or lookout duties.

11 For any further query regarding this circular, please contact Capt. I.G. Sangameswar at Tel: 63756205.

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