

Hong Kong Fleet Operation Advisory Committee

**Proposal of a new manning scale on ratings
on board Hong Kong registered ships**

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to seek members' views and endorsement on the proposal of a new manning scale on ratings on board Hong Kong registered ships.

Background

2. The 2010 Manila Amendments introduced, among others, new grades of “Able Seafarer Deck (II/5)”(AS(D)) and “Able Seafarer Engine (III/5)”(AS(E)). After consulting the ex-Shipping Consultative Committee (SCC), the Hong Kong Marine Department (HKMD) revised the “Guidance on the Application for Minimum Safe Manning Certificate” (Guidance) and disseminated the revised Guidance via MSIN No.32/2013 on 19 September 2013 (See Appendix I - Appendix III to MSIN No.32/2013) in order to implement the 2010 Manila Amendments. The revised Guidance stipulates that with effective from 1 January 2017, 5 AS(D)s and 2 AS(E)s would be required for a ship of GT 10,000 or above (+MOD and UMS).

3. By considering the difficulties of ship owners and managers in employing sufficient number of AS(D) and AS(E) to work on board ships, HKMD issued a Circular Letter (See Appendix II) on 4 July 2016 to introduce a temporary measure to allow the aforementioned 3 out of the 5 AS(D) required to be substituted by ratings holding certificate of proficiency (CoP) of Ratings forming part of a navigational watch (RW(D)(II/4)); and 1 out of the 2 AS(E) required to be substituted by rating holding CoP of Ratings forming part of an engineering watch (RW(E) (III/4)). However, these ratings need to acquire 12 months experience in relevant capacities while holding respective CoP of RW(D) (II/4) and RW(E) (III/4).

4. Since 1 January 2017, HKMD has received frequent feedback from ship owners and managers regarding the difficulty to recruit ratings with AS(D) and AS(E) qualifications. Without compromising safety of ships and seafarers, HKMD had conducted a comprehensive review of the requirements of ratings on board Hong Kong registered ships by taking into consideration of the following factors:

- a. international convention requirements;
- b. the relevant Hong Kong legislation provisions;
- c. difficulties encountered by maritime industry;

- d. the advancement of shipboard equipment (e.g. mooring lines carried permanently on winch drum and not requiring to be stoppered of and transferred to bitts);
- e. the common practice that on board training for seafarers under supervision for obtaining higher grade CoPs; and
- f. benchmarking with other major reputable flag States.

The Proposal

5. Based on the results of the review, HKMD hereby proposes to adopt a new manning scale as follows:

(Ship of GT 10,000 or above, +MOD and UMS)

| Ratings | | |
|--|-----------|-----|
| Grade | STCW Reg. | No. |
| Able Seafarer Deck (AS(D)) | II/5 | 2 |
| Ratings forming part of a navigational watch (RW(D)) | II/4* | 3 |
| Other Deck Ratings (OR(D)) | VI/1 | 0 |
| Able Seafarer Engine (AS(E)) | III/5 | 1 |
| Ratings forming part of an engineering watch (RW(E)) | III/4* | 1 |
| Other Engine Room Ratings (OR(E)) | VI/1 | 0 |

- *(i) Where a seafarer who is not a qualified AS(D) or AS(E) is assigned to carry out any of the functions on board as specified in table A-II/5 or A-III/5 of the STCW Code, the ship owner and manager shall ensure that—
 - (a) the assignment is made for the purpose of enabling the seafarer to meet the requirements of a higher grade CoP; and
 - (b) the function is carried out under the supervision of a qualified AS(D)/AS(E) or a qualified officer.
- (ii) Ratings of RW(D)(II/4) and RW(E)(III/4) are not required to acquire 12 months experience in relevant capacities while holding the respective CoP.

Consultation

6. This paper is to seek members’ support for the proposed new manning scale in paragraph 5. Subject to the members’ support, relevant MSIN and guidance will be issued with a specified enforcement date to supersede previous ones.

Marine Department
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