

Hong Kong Registered Ships
Guidance on the Application for Minimum Safe Manning Certificate

(Appendix III to MSIN No. 32/2013)

The purpose of this guidance note is to assist the ship owners/managers to apply for the Minimum Safe Manning Certificate (MSMC) for cargo vessels registered in Hong Kong. It contains procedure, documents required and the estimated manning levels for deck and engine departments under different conditions.

1. Procedures and Documents Required :

Application form for the MSMC can be retrieved on internet, in the Hong Kong Marine Department home page at http://www.mardep.gov.hk/en/forms/pdf/msmc_app.pdf (English version) or obtained on request from Cargo Ships Safety Section by fax (852) 2545 0556 or by e-mail (ss_css@mardep.gov.hk).

The application for MSMC is free of charge. Applicants should complete the application form, sign the Declaration in the last page of the form, and submit either in person or by fax or email shown in paragraph 3 together with the copy of the following supporting documents:

- (a) Copy of Mooring plans or General Arrangement for the cargo vessel in question;
- (b) Copy of Certificate of Survey;
- (c) Copy of UMS Certificate, if applicable; and
- (d) Copy of Document of Compliance (ISM)

to the Senior Surveyor of Ships, Cargo Ships Safety Section for consideration. An application with insufficient supporting documents will not be processed. In order to avoid delay in processing the application, you are strongly advised to submit your application together with the above-mentioned supporting documents in one batch rather than item by item. Please note additional documents or information may be required if necessary. In the event that this Department is not satisfied with the proposal put forward by the owner or the management company, a new scale will be proposed by the Department. In case the owner or ship management company disagree with the counter proposal, they can arrange a practical demonstration of their crew to carry out the essential tasks in the context of their safe manning proposal for assessment by a surveyor of this Department. The cost involved for such assessment would be borne by the owners or operators.

In the event of any change to the equipment, construction, use of the ship, or the provisions of the approved Ship's Security Plan (SSP) that may affect the safe manning level of number, insufficient manning level in complying with the hours of rest requirements or change of management company, the owner or ship management company should make an application for the issue of a new safe manning document. Upon receipt of the new certificate by the applicant, the obsolete manning certificate should be returned to Cargo Ships Safety Section for cancellation.

2. Estimated Manning Levels :

The manning level varies with the size of the cargo vessel and type of mooring arrangement for deck

department, and with the engine power and mode of engine room watch for engine department. The owner or ship management company of a Hong Kong registered ship is required to make an assessment of the number and grades of officers and ratings necessary for the safe operation and the security of the ship in accordance with the IMO resolution A.1047(27). The manning level on board should be sufficient to ensure that:

- (a) the watchkeeping standard stipulated in Chapter VIII, Part A of the STCW Code can be maintained;
- (b) the officers and the ratings can perform their duties in accordance with the provisions of the approved Ship's Security Plan (SSP); and
- (c) the officers and ratings are not required to work such long hours or under such condition that may jeopardize the safety and security of the ship, or be injurious to their own personal health and safety.

2.1 Officers:

The number and grades of officers are stipulated in the Merchant Shipping (Seafarers) (Certification of Officers) Regulation. The following is extracted from the Regulation for reference.

		Deck Officer			Marine Engineer Officer		
		Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3
	Foreign-going ships						
1	Any passenger ships	1	1	2			
2	Ships, other than passenger ships, of 1,600 GT or more	1	1	2			
3	Ships, other than passenger ships, of under 1,600 GT	1	1	1			
4	Any ships of 3,000 kW registered power or more				1	1	2
5	Any ships of 350 kW or more but under 3,000 kW registered power				1		3
					or		

* *A service endorsement is required.*

If the proposed numbers and grades of officers differ from those set out above, the application form should be accompanied by a letter setting out the justification for the difference(s). The letter should cover the principles set out in the IMO Resolution A.1047(27). Exemption from the Regulation will only be considered where the size of the ship, length of voyage, trading pattern or other special operational environment warrant a reduction. Inspection of the ship by a Government surveyor may be required. Where the issue of any certificate is dependent upon any survey or inspection to be undertaken, there shall be payable, in addition to the appropriate fee specified in the Merchant Shipping (Fees) Regulations and the Schedule together with any travelling or other expenses involved, if any.

2.2 Ratings:

The manning level varies with the trading patterns of the vessel, cargo carried, type and size of ships, mode of engine room watch and the mooring arrangement of the cargo vessel. The number and grades of ratings are listed below for reference.

Minimum Safe Manning Scale – Conventional Manning Mode

	Before 1 January 2017				On or after 1 January 2017			
	Deck Department		Engine Department		Deck Department		Engine Department	
	+MOD	-MOD	UMS	N/UMS	+MOD	-MOD	UMS	N/UMS
Ships of 500 GT to 3,000 GT	RW(D)		RW(E)		AS(D)		AS(E)	
	3	3	1	2	4	5	1	2
	OR(D)		OR(E)		RW(D)		RW(E)	
	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ships of 30,00 GT to 10,000 GT	RW(D)		RW(E)		AS(D)		AS(E)	
	3	3	2	3	4	5	2	3
	OR(D)		OR(E)		RW(D)		RW(E)	
	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ships of 10,000 GT and above	RW(D)		RW(E)		AS(D)		AS(E)	
	4	4	2	3	5	6	2	3
	OR(D)		OR(E)		RW(D)		RW(E)	
	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-

Definitions:

For the purpose of the application for Minimum Safe Manning Certificate, unless expressly provided otherwise :

1. **AS(D)** — Able Seafarer Deck (STCW Reg. II/5);
2. **AS(E)** — Able Seafarer Engine (STCW Reg. III/5);
3. **RW(D)** — Rating forming part of a navigational watch (STCW Reg. II/4);
4. **RW(E)** — Rating forming part of an engineering watch (STCW Reg. III/4);
5. **OR(D)** — Other Deck Ratings (STCW Reg. VI/1);
6. **OR(E)** — Other Engine Room Ratings (STCW Reg. VI/1);
7. **UMS** — Unmanned Machinery Space;
8. **N/UMS** — A vessel equipped with a conventional (Non UMS) engine room;
9. **+ MOD** (+ Mooring Lines On Drums) — refers to the mooring arrangement and requires:
 - (a) two mooring lines per docking station to be equipped with either self-tension winches or mooring ropes carried permanently on winch drum and not requiring to be stoppered off and transferred to bits;

- (b) the back spring at each docking station to be served by a self-tension winch or a spring carried permanently on a winch drum not requiring stoppering off and transfer to bits or of limited size (3 ½ inches or 30 mm);
10. **–MOD** (– Mooring Lines On Drums) — equates to conventional mooring arrangement, i.e., winch or windlass drum ends are used to warp mooring ropes and spring which are transferred to bits after being stoppered off.

2.3 Ship's Cook:

The minimum mandatory provision from Regulation 3.2 of the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC), 2006 is that seafarers working on or ships operating commercially with 10 crew or more must carry a qualified cook onboard. The MLC has not yet applied to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR). We are now preparing local legislation for the implementation. Under this transition period, owners of Hong Kong registered ships are free to opt whether a qualified cook to be carried on board or not. Before the date of MLC applied to HKSAR, if a “Yes” is selected to the question “Will a full-time qualified cook be carried?” on application form, then the condition, “**Where the total manning of not less than 10, in addition to the manning scale mentioned in the above table, there shall be a qualified cook**”, will be added as a “Special Requirements or Conditions” on Minimum Safe Manning Certificate (MSMC). If a “No” is selected, the above mentioned condition will not be appeared on the MSMC. Shipowners or management companies are advised to think carefully when completing this item. Placing a qualified cook on board is an evidence of compliance with Regulation 3.2 of the MLC and thus enabling the ship to reduce the likelihood of delays related to inspections in foreign ports in countries that have ratified the MLC as Hong Kong registered ships would still be subject to the provisions of the MLC on a “no more favourable treatment” basis when operating in their waters. When the MLC is applied to the HKSAR. A qualified cook must be carried on all Hong Kong registered ships which operating with 10 crew or more and those ships which have opted “No” previously will be required to re-apply for a MSMC again, where applicable, with the condition mentioned above.

Enquiries relating to the requirements on the training and qualification of cook for Hong Kong registered ships should be made to:

Assistant Shipping Master
Mercantile Marine Office
Marine Department
3/F, Harbour Building
38 Pier Road, Central
Hong Kong

Tel: +(852) 2852 3061

Fax: +(852) 2545 4669

E-mail: mmo_mdd@mardep.gov.hk

2.4 Manning scale for cargo vessels less than 3,000 GT:

If the proposed numbers and grades of the officers and ratings differ from those set out in paragraphs 2.1 and 2.2 above, the application form should be accompanied by a letter setting out the justifications for the difference(s). The letter should cover the principles set out in the IMO Resolution A.1047(27). Exemption from the Regulation will only be considered where the size of the cargo vessel, length of voyage, trading pattern or other special operational environment warrant a reduction.

2.5 Dangerous Cargo Endorsement:

In accordance with the Merchant Shipping (Seafarers) (Tankers – Officers and Ratings) Regulation:- Deck officers, engineer officers, electro-technical officers on the various types of tanker are required to hold certificates of competency or licences that carry basic dangerous cargo endorsement(s) or certificates of proficiency for dangerous cargo operation for the same type of tanker; and Master, chief mate, chief engineer, second engineer and any other person having an immediate responsibility for loading, discharging, care in transit, handling of cargo, tank cleaning or other cargo-related operations on the various types of tankers are required to hold certificates of competency or licences that carry advanced dangerous cargo endorsement(s) or certificates of proficiency for dangerous cargo operation in accordance with the relevant determinations made under Sections 8, 10 and 15 of the Merchant Shipping (Seafarers) (Certification of Officers) Regulation.

Ratings assigned specific duties and responsibilities related to cargo or cargo equipment on the various types of tanker shall hold a certificate of proficiency for dangerous cargo operation or certificate in basic training for the same type of tanker cargo operations.

3 Enquiries:

Enquiries relating to the application for Minimum Safe Manning Certificate should be made to:

Senior Surveyor
Cargo Ships Safety Section
Marine Department
24/F, Harbour Building
38 Pier Road, Central
Hong Kong

Tel: +(852) 2852 4510
Fax: +(852) 2545 0556
E-mail: ss_css@mardep.gov.hk