

**LOCAL VESSELS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**Joint Sub-committee on Class I and Class IV Vessels**

**Regular Medical Examination for Coxswains**

**Purpose**

In response to members' views, the Marine Department (MD) has drafted the proposed arrangement for regular medical examinations for coxswains of local passenger carrying vessels. This paper sets out the details of the arrangement.

**Background**

2. The Joint Sub-committee discussed Paper Nos. 3/2014 and 5/2014 at its meetings on 28 August and 27 November 2014.

**Drafting of Medical Examination Arrangement**

3. In the meeting on 27 November 2014, there were views that initially the industry should be encouraged to arrange regular medical examinations for coxswains. Vessel operators who have health conditions may pose risks to the public, it is therefore deemed necessary for holders of Coxswain Certificate to stay physically fit for vessel operation.

4. MD notes that vessel operators of relatively large-scale have arranged regular medical examination for coxswains on their own. To help regain public confidence on marine safety in Hong Kong waters, MD will fully implement the proposal which helps enhance the safety of passenger vessels as early as possible so as to meet public expectations on local vessels and

navigational safety.

5. The draft guidelines on regular medical examination for coxswains of vessels permitted to carry more than 100 passengers are set out in the **Annex**, taking into consideration members' views at the meetings on 28 August and 27 November 2014. Subject to members' consent and the Department of Justice's advice, MD intends to encourage shipping companies to make such arrangement promptly for their coxswains early next year so as to avoid any hasty arrangements from full implementation of the proposal. Medical examinations conducted before implementation of the proposal will be recognised if the requirements of the annex are met.

### **Way Forward**

6. Subject to members' views, MD will submit the proposal to the Local Vessels Advisory Committee for consultation.

### **Advice Sought**

7. Members are invited to give their views on the paper.

**Marine Department**

**25 June 2015**

**(Draft)**

**Guidelines on Regular Medical Examinations for  
Coxswains of Class I Vessels**

**Introduction**

Class I vessels include vessels that are frequently used by the public. It is reasonable and prudent for the vessel owners or operators to check the physical conditions of the coxswains they employed from time to time to see if they are fit for operating vessels. The coxswains should also pay attention to their physical conditions, and if physical conditions that affect their operation of vessels arise, they should inform their employers immediately to make suitable arrangements.

2. This paper aims to provide the employers of coxswains of Class I vessels with guidance on arranging regular medical examinations for their coxswains. The guidelines provided here were formulated in consultation with the local vessel industry, and endorsed by the Local Vessels Advisory Committee at its meeting on [ ]. The Marine Department (MD) requires the employers of coxswains of Class I vessels to arrange regular medical examinations for their coxswains in accordance with the guidelines.

**Regular Medical Examinations**

Examination Frequency

3. For coxswains of Class I vessels permitted to carry more than 100 passengers, if they are employed on or after the issue date of the guidelines, their employers should arrange medical examinations for them upon their appointment and subsequently at intervals not exceeding five years.

4. For coxswains who were employed before the issue date of the guidelines and operate a vessel carrying more than 100 passengers, their employers should arrange medical examinations for them within five years from the issue date of the guidelines and subsequently at intervals not exceeding five years.

5. Apart from those mentioned in paragraph 3 and 4 above, for coxswains who are qualified to operate a vessel carrying more than 100 passengers and underwent medical examinations within the five years before the issue date of the guidelines, their medical examination reports will be recognised provided that they passed the examination items required by this guidelines.

6. The employers may consider arranging regular medical examinations for their coxswains more frequently.

#### Items under Examination

7. Regular medical examinations should at least include the following items:

- (a) General examination (including weight, height, blood pressure, pulse measurements, etc.);
- (b) Urine test (albumin and glucose test);
- (c) Chest X-ray;
- (d) Eyesight test;
- (e) Blood test (haemoglobin test); and
- (f) Hearing test.

8. The employers may consider including more items for examination.

#### Examination Results

9. The employers should refer to the results of medical examinations and medical practitioner's comments or opinions on the overall physical

conditions of the coxswains to carry out appropriate human resources management in relation these coxswains.

10. The employers should keep the medical examination reports (including examination results and medical practitioner's comments or opinions) of the coxswains properly for a suitable period. When handling the medical examination reports of the coxswains, the employers should comply with the relevant provisions in the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (Cap 486) as well as the relevant codes and guidelines issued by the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data.

### **Enquiry**

11. For enquiries about the guidelines, please contact the Shipping Registry and Seafarers' Branch of the Shipping Division of the MD.

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**Marine Department**

**25 June 2015**