

## **Pilotage Advisory Committee**

### **Retaining the Same Class of Licence for Pilots to Work beyond the Age of 65 Years**

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this paper is to seek members' views/comments on a proposal to retain the current class of pilotage license for a pilot wishing to continue to work beyond the age of 65.

#### **Background**

2. Pursuant to Section 9A of the Pilotage Ordinance, Cap.84 (see Annex I), a licensed pilot attaining the age of 65 years may apply for permission to work beyond the age of 65 years until reaching 68. The pilot may be issued with a Class IIC licence by the Pilotage Authority subject to conformation of physical, mental fitness and eyesight examination.

3. Before the establishment of a retirement age, there was no age limit on pilot retirement. The issue was then thoroughly discussed by the Pilotage Advisory Committee (PAC) at its meeting held on 9 January 1986. After some discussion, the meeting agreed that a mandatory retirement age of 65 should be set for pilots. Extension of service might be granted for a maximum period of three years until 68 subject to his medical fitness and his pilot's licence be automatically downgraded to the lowest class (Class IIC) on reaching 65. The mandatory retirement age of 65 of a licensed pilot was then legislated in 1993.

4. In 1993, following a consultancy study commissioned by Marine Department (MD) on the pilotage services, the various classes of pilotage licences were revised and a new class of pilotage licence "Class IID" was proposed to be introduced into the legislation. The new Class IID became the lowest class of pilotage licence since then.

5. Furthermore, owing to the irregular work and increasing physical workload of pilots, the aforementioned study also urged for a younger retirement age for pilots. It recommended that the retirement age should be lowered to the age of 60 gradually and to allow pilots over age 65 to pilot the category of vessels permitted by Class IID pilots. Since the introduction of Class IID licence, there were two applications to work beyond the age of 65 and Class IID licences were issued administratively.

### **The Proposal**

6. Due to the declining supply of qualified Master Mariners in recent years, the recommendation to lower the retirement age to 60 could not be implemented. Furthermore, there is no clear justification in lowering the retirement age and restricting pilots over age 65 to pilot only the category of vessels permitted by Class IID pilots. Besides, such restriction would be a waste of the invaluable piloting experience and expertise of the pilots. It is therefore proposed to issue the same class of licence a pilot is holding at the time of his application to work beyond the age of 65 years until 68, subject to the more stringent annual medical and eyesight examinations. Information on pilots' retirement age and extension of service for comparable ports in the region is attached at Annex II for members' reference.

### **Advice Sought**

7. Members are requested to offer their views/comments on this matter.

**Marine Department**

**June 2010**

## Annex I

**Chapter: 84      Title: PILOTAGE ORDINANCE      Gazette Number:**  
**Section: 9A      Heading: Extension of service beyond      Version Date: 30/06/1997**  
**the age of 65**

- (1) A licensed pilot who is about to attain the age of 65 years or who has attained the age of 65 years but has not attained the age of 68 years may, not later than 14 days after the expiry of his licence, apply to the Authority in the prescribed manner for permission to work as a pilot beyond the age of 65 years for any period not exceeding 1 year.
- (2) Where the Authority is satisfied as to the physical and mental fitness and eyesight of an applicant under subsection (1) who has been re-examined in accordance with section 10, the Authority may, subject to subsection (3) and on payment of the prescribed fee, permit the applicant to work as a pilot beyond the age of 65 years and issue or renew, as may be appropriate, to the applicant a Class IIC licence as prescribed in the Pilotage Order (Cap 84 sub. leg. C) valid for any period not exceeding 1 year.
- (3) A licensed pilot shall not be permitted to work beyond the time when he attains the age of 68 years.

(Added 36 of 1993 s. 5)

**Retirement Age of Maritime Pilots in Neighbouring Ports**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Retirement Age</b>	<b>Extension of Service</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
Australia	Most pilots choose to retire at about 65	Some pilots are still working at 76	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The anti discrimination laws in the country prevent downgrading of pilots who are advancing to retirement age</li> <li>- Only needs to pass the medical examination</li> </ul>
Hong Kong	65	Allowed but not beyond 68	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Downgraded to Class 2D beyond 65</li> <li>- Needs to pass the required medical examination</li> </ul>
Kobe/Osaka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not stipulated in law of age limit.</li> <li>- Voluntary agreement not beyond 72</li> </ul>	N.A.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No downgrading beyond certain age.</li> <li>- Only needs to pass the medical examination.</li> </ul>
Singapore	Statutory limit is 62	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Allowed. No age limit on extension.</li> <li>- The oldest serving pilot is 65 years.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No downgrading after extension</li> <li>- Only needs to pass the medical examination.</li> </ul>
South Korea	65	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No downgrading beyond certain age.</li> </ul>
Shanghai	60	65	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Downgraded to one grade below</li> <li>- Needs to pass the required medical examination</li> </ul>
Kaohsiung	65	N.A.	N.A.