



16721
NMC Policy Letter 12-02
July 16, 2002

From: Commanding Officer, U.S. Coast Guard National Maritime Center
To: Distribution

Subj: CONDUCTING ASSESSMENTS OF SKILLS TO SATISFY REQUIREMENTS OF
THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON STANDARDS OF TRAINING,
CERTIFICATION, AND WATCHKEEPING FOR SEAFARERS, 1978, AS
AMENDED

Ref: (a) International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and
Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, as amended (STCW)

1. PURPOSE. This policy letter provides guidance concerning conducting practical assessments during a Coast Guard approved course, and the evaluation of the completion of practical assessments as part of an application for STCW certification. *It applies only to assessments that are not done in conjunction with an approved training program.*
2. ACTION. Commanding officers of units with marine safety responsibilities should bring this policy letter to the attention of the maritime industry with interests in marine personnel issues and to institutions that offer U. S. Coast Guard approved training. This policy letter will be distributed by electronic means only. It is available on the World Wide Web at <http://www.uscg.mil/STCW/m-policy.htm>.
3. BACKGROUND. The 1995 amendments to the STCW require that candidates for certification be assessed in their ability to carry out professional duties and tasks. In various policy letters, the National Maritime Center has published the criteria to be used for the conduct of these assessments, and "Control Sheets" to document their successful completion. Also provided were assessment summaries for use by Coast Guard Regional Examination Centers (RECs) when evaluating mariner applications.
4. DISCUSSION.
 - a. As used in this policy letter, the term "approved training program" refers to a complete program approved to satisfy all of the training, service, and assessment required for the certifications listed in the following paragraph. "Approved course" refers to a discrete course intended to satisfy a single training requirement such as ARPA or Bridge Resource Management.
 - b. This policy applies to mariners applying for the following STCW certifications who did not participate in an approved training program:
 - Rating Forming Part of a Navigational Watch (RFPNW)
 - Rating Forming Part of an Engineering Watch (RFPEW)

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- Officer in Charge of a Navigational Watch (OICNW)
 - Officer in Charge of an Engineering Watch (OICEW)
 - Chief Mate and Master
 - Second (First Assistant) Engineer Officer and Chief Engineer Officer
- c. Applicants for the certifications listed above will be required to provide evidence of successful completion of the appropriate practical assessments. Unless the mariner is part of an approved training program, these assessments must be documented on appropriate Control Sheets or as otherwise provided in this policy letter.
- d. Assessments may be performed either in-service by a qualified ship's officer during a mariner's normal employment aboard a vessel, during a Coast Guard approved course, or by a training institution approved by the Coast Guard to perform specified assessments (not part of an approved course). Information on conducting assessments as part of an approved course is provided in Enclosure (1), and outside of an approved course by approved training institutions in Enclosure (2). Prior approval from the National Maritime Center is required to conduct assessments other than in-service assessments by a ship's officer.
- e. When evaluating applications, RECs should evaluate the mariner's Control Sheets and determine that all assessments were successfully completed, or that the mariner has either been assessed by an approved training institution or successfully completed a Coast Guard approved or accepted course that was expressly approved as being the equivalent of specifically identified assessments.



DONALD J. KERLIN
Acting

Encl: (1) Instructions for conducting assessments of competence in Coast Guard approved courses
(2) Instructions for conducting assessments of competence outside of Coast Guard approved courses

Distribution: Commandant (G-MSO)
All Area Commanders (Am)
All District Commanders (m)
All COs, MSOs
All Activity Commanders
All RECs

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CONDUCTING ASSESSMENTS OF COMPETENCE
IN CONJUNCTION WITH COAST GUARD APPROVED COURSES

1. Schools with Coast Guard approved courses wishing to conduct relevant assessments of competence during the course should make a written request to the National Maritime Center. The request should identify the course in which the assessments will be done, and provide a description of the manner in which the assessments will be done that includes the performance condition under which the assessment will be conducted, the performance behavior the student is expected to demonstrate, and the performance measure and performance standard that will be used to determine if the student has successfully demonstrated the required task. If the school will be using the national assessment guidelines *exactly* as published, they need only identify the assessment control sheet numbers, and describe how they will be performed within the course.
2. If the proposed assessments are acceptable, the National Maritime Center will approve their use in the course(s). If the national assessment guidelines are used, the school will be authorized to “sign-off” for a successful demonstration on the students’ control sheets. This authorization will be included in the approval of the course. When evaluating mariner applications, Coast Guard RECs will verify that a specific course was approved to sign-off on students’ control sheets. Control sheets that were not signed off in service aboard a vessel or as part of a course approved to conduct assessments will not be accepted. The only control sheets that should be given to students are those provided with the appropriate National Maritime Center Policy Letters. An example of a course approval authorizing a school to sign students’ control sheets is as follows:

Any applicant who has successfully completed your 5-day Radar Observer (Unlimited) course, including successful demonstration of all practical assessments, will:

- a) Satisfy the requirements of 46 CFR 10.480 for an endorsement as Radar Observer (Unlimited) and the Radar training requirements for certification as *Officer in Charge of a Navigational Watch* on vessels of 500 or more gross tonnage (ITC); AND
- b) In conjunction with this course, any approved instructor is authorized to sign-off for a successful demonstration on the students’ “Control Sheets” for the following assessments from the National Assessment Guidelines for Table A-II/1 of the STCW Code: OICNW-1-2B; OICNW-1-2C; OICNW-3-1A; OICNW-3-1B; OICNW-3-1C; OICNW-3-1D; OICNW-3-1E; OICNW-3-1F; OICNW-3-1G; OICNW-3-1H; OICNW-3-1I; OICNW-3-J; OICNW-3-1K and also for assessment number M-5-1B from the National Assessment Guidelines for Table A-II/2 of the STCW Code.

3. If the school wishes to change the national assessment guidelines in any way, or will use alternative assessment measures that the National Maritime Center finds to be equivalent to the national assessment guidelines, the course approval will be revised to include that the course will substitute for specifically identified assessments. Because the national assessment guidelines may not be followed exactly as written, schools using alternative assessment measures should *not* sign students’ control sheets. When the students apply for their certification, the school’s certificate of course completion will be accepted in lieu of signed control sheets for those assessments. This approval may also be given upon request to courses that use the National

ENCLOSURE (1)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CONDUCTING ASSESSMENTS OF COMPETENCE
IN CONJUNCTION WITH COAST GUARD APPROVED COURSES

Assessment Guidelines but wish to avoid the administrative burden of signing individual Control Sheets. An example of such an approval is:

Any applicant who has successfully completed your 5-day Radar Observer (Unlimited) course, including successful demonstration of all practical assessments, will:

a) Satisfy the requirements of 46 CFR 10.480 for an endorsement as Radar Observer (Unlimited) and the Radar training requirements for certification as *Officer in Charge of a Navigational Watch* on vessels of 500 or more gross tonnage (ITC); AND

b) Will be considered to have successfully demonstrated the equivalent of the following assessments from the National Assessment Guidelines for Table A-II/1 of the STCW Code: OICNW-1-2B; OICNW-1-2C; OICNW-3-1A; OICNW-3-1B; OICNW-3-1C; OICNW-3-1D; OICNW-3-1E; OICNW-3-1F; OICNW-3-1G; OICNW-3-1H; OICNW-3-1I; OICNW-3-1J; OICNW-3-1K and also for assessment numbers M-5-1B and M-5-1C from the National Assessment Guidelines for Table A-II/2 of the STCW Code. Applicants who have successfully completed your course need not present completed "Control Sheets" for these assessments in application for STCW certification.

4. If the National Maritime Center approved the conduct of assessments within a course, any instructor approved to teach this course may conduct the assessments.

5. Schools will be required to maintain records of all student assessments. It is not necessary to keep photocopies of each student's control sheet or other checklist; it will be sufficient to keep a blank "master copy" of the assessment criteria or control sheet used, and a summary of each student's performance. This summary should reference the assessment criteria used, and include the student's name, the name of the assessor(s), the date each assessment was conducted, and whether the student passed or failed the assessment. A sample assessment summary is provided on the following page.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

STUDENT	SSN	ASSESSMENT														
		OICNW-1-2B	OICNW-1-2C	OICNW-3-1A	OICNW-3-1B	OICNW-3-1C	OICNW-3-1D	OICNW-3-1E	OICNW-3-1F	OICNW-3-1G	OICNW-3-1H	OICNW-3-1I	OICNW-3-1J	OICNW-3-1K	M-5-1B	M-5-1C

SAMPLE

Instructions: "✓" Indicates the student successfully completed the assessment, "X" indicates an unsuccessful demonstration

Assessors: _____

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CONDUCTING ASSESSMENTS OF COMPETENCE
OUTSIDE OF COAST GUARD APPROVED COURSES

1. Schools wishing to conduct assessments of competence outside of a Coast Guard approved course must request written approval to do so from the National Maritime Center. The request should specifically identify the assessments the school wishes to conduct, and describe the manner in which they will be performed. If the school wishes to use assessment criteria that differ in any way from the National Assessment Guidelines, the assessment criteria to be used should be provided.
2. The National Maritime Center will only approve assessments to be performed by a school that holds Coast Guard approval for course(s) similar in subject matter to the assessments to be performed. For example, a school wishing to assess candidates for certification as Chief Mate and Master for competencies that entail the use of ARPA must hold a Coast Guard approved ARPA course (the candidate does not need to attend the ARPA course in order to be assessed). Improper or fraudulent assessments will be subject to a withdrawal of approval for the school's course(s).
3. If the National Maritime Center approves the request to conduct assessments, any approved instructor for the corresponding course may conduct assessments.
4. If the National Assessment Guidelines are used, the school will be authorized to "sign-off" for a successful demonstration on the mariners' control sheets. Schools should maintain records of assessments, a summary similar to the sample provided in Enclosure (1) to this policy letter may be used.
5. If alternative criteria are used, the mariner should be issued a letter on the school's letterhead that is substantially similar to the attached sample. The school should keep a copy of this letter in its records.

**Nevada Maritime Training Service
123 Landlocked Drive
Dry Lake, NV 98765
(775) 555-1234**

August 1, 2002

U.S. Coast Guard Evaluator:

This will certify that _____, SSN 123-45-6789, successfully completed the assessments of competence listed below. The assessments were conducted as authorized in the attached letter from the National Maritime Center.

ASSESSMENT	DATE	ASSESSOR
M-5-1A	July 30, 2002	Assessor Name
M-5-1B	July 30, 2002	Assessor Name
M-5-1C	July 30, 2002	Assessor Name
M-5-1D	July 30, 2002	Assessor Name

Sincerely,

Encl: NMC letter dated June 15, 2002

SAMPLE