



16721

NMC Policy Letter 16-01

DEC - 7 2001

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

Subj: MERCHANT MARINE LICENSING EXAMINATION QUESTION COMMENT AND PROTEST

1. PURPOSE. This policy letter provides clarification and guidance to the Regional Examination Centers (RECs) about the acceptance of merchant mariner examination question comments and protests.
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 the personnel field. Personnel of Regional Examination Centers should be guided by the provisions of this policy letter in accepting examination question comments and protests. 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. DISCUSSION.
 - a. The Coast Guard permits candidates while completing their merchant mariner licensing and documentation examinations to comment upon and protest specific questions used on an examination. When the candidate believes that there is something wrong with a question that prevents it being answered correctly, i.e., no correct answer, more than one correct answer shown, poorly worded question, etc, he or she is provided the opportunity during the examination to write a comment for any question. When a candidate fails the exam, each comment submitted for an incorrectly answered question becomes a protest and is reviewed to determine if the candidate has provided sufficient information to receive credit for that question. Even when the comments will not affect the examination grade, they are considered very valuable and have been used to improve the quality of the questions used on future tests.
 - b. When a candidate has been informed of a failing grade and has failed the examination module by no more than one question, he or she will be given the opportunity to review each question for which he or she was not given credit. Immediately after their review and prior to departing the examination room following the review, he or she is to be given the opportunity to submit a protest on no more than two missed questions. The completed protest form(s), candidate answer sheet, and pertinent calculations are to be forwarded to the National Maritime Center for review. Following review of the protest, the REC will be informed as to the result of the candidate's protest and if necessary the final grade will be adjusted accordingly.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. J. Fink", written over a circular stamp.

E. J. FINK

Encl: (1) Sample Comment/Protest Form

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

COMMENT - PROTEST SHEET

REC _____

_____ COMMENT _____ PROTEST (For Coast Guard use only)

APPLICANT'S NAME: _____

MODULE NAME: _____

MODULE NUMBER: _____ QUESTION NUMBER: _____

Use a separate form for each comment/protest.

If you believe there is something wrong with a question that prevents it being answered correctly, i.e., no correct answer, or that you believe there is more than one correct answer shown, or the question is poorly worded, etc, please give all the details below. Include your reasons and all calculations for math problems, such as: pump capacity, navigation, stability, or cargo. Provide what you believe to be the correct answer. Even if your comments will not affect your grade, they are considered very valuable and will be used to improve the quality of the questions used on future tests. If you fail this exam and submit your comments with your completed answer sheet for that question, each comment sheet for a question you did not receive credit will then become a protest for that question. Further, if you fail the examination module by no more than one question, you will be given the opportunity to review each question for which you were not given credit. Immediately after your review and without leaving the exam room following your review you may submit a protest as indicated above on no more than two questions in addition to the comment sheets already submitted. If you are given the opportunity by the examiner to review your answer sheet after it has been graded and leave the exam room for **ANY REASON**, your protests will not be accepted.

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____