



16721

NMC Policy Ltr No. 21-98

November 10, 1998

From: Commanding Officer, National Maritime Center

To: Distribution

Subj: ACCEPTANCE OF TRAINING FOR QUALIFICATION AS A PERSON IN CHARGE
OF MEDICAL CARE ON BOARD SHIP

1. The International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification, and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, as amended, (STCW), Regulation VI/4, requires that personnel in charge of medical care on board ship meet the STCW's standards of competency. Title 46, Code of Federal Regulations, Subpart 12 permits an endorsement to a license or merchant mariner's document when the mariner establishes that he or she meets the STCW's standards. The National Maritime Center (NMC) has not approved any courses as meeting the requirements for an endorsement; however, there are excellent courses on medical care that are believed to substantially meet the STCW's requirements.

2. The following registered staff officers automatically meet the STCW's standards and may be issued the endorsement based on their professional qualifications: medical doctors, professional nurses, marine physician's assistant, and hospital corpsman. Mariners who hold a valid certification as an emergency medical technician (non-ambulance) may also have the "PERSON IN CHARGE OF MEDICAL CARE" endorsement placed on their MMD.

3. Institutions that provided training in medical care that meets the STCW's standards before 1 August 1998, may submit a course outline to the National Maritime Center for review. If the course meets the STCW's standards and the training institution certifies that the course has been taught as represented in their submittal, the course will be accepted by the Coast Guard. This acceptance will authorize any mariner who has satisfactorily completed the course before 1 August 1998 and within five years of the date of application to have his or her merchant mariner's document (MMD) endorsed as "PERSON IN CHARGE OF MEDICAL CARE." The mariner's STCW form will also be endorsed with this qualification. To be issued the STCW-95 form, the mariner must also meet all other requirements for issuance of that form as stated in Navigation and Vessel Inspection Circular 8-97. If the mariner does not hold an MMD, the endorsement may be placed on the license.

4. Training institutions who believe that their course as taught prior to 1 August 1998, met the STCW's requirements, may submit the information to the National Maritime Center (NMC-4B). If the information meets the standards of the STCW and this policy letter, appropriate information about acceptance of the course's completion will be disseminated to the Regional Examination Centers. The course outline should be accompanied by a certification that the course was taught as represented in the outline; a time period during which the course was taught should be specified.

5. Training institutions who wish to submit a course for approval that will qualify applicants who take the course after 1 August 1998 for the endorsement as "PERSON IN CHARGE OF

16721
NMC Policy Ltr No. 21-98
November 10, 1998

Subj: ACCEPTANCE OF TRAINING FOR QUALIFICATION AS A PERSON IN CHARGE
OF MEDICAL CARE ON BOARD SHIP

MEDICAL CARE" should submit a course approval package to NMC-4B. The package should contain the material set forth in Navigation and Vessel Inspection Circular 5-95.

6. The STCW is not a manning document; it establishes standards for a mariner's professional qualifications. United States' manning laws or regulations do not require that a vessel have someone specifically designated as a person responsible to take charge of extended medical care. It is not the intent of this policy letter to formalize or impose new manning requirements. It merely provides guidance for review of medical training courses that may meet the STCW's requirements and acceptance of the qualifications of mariners. It therefore provides shipping companies an avenue for proving that the person designated to take charge of medical care meets the requirements of the STCW.

7. Questions concerning the above policies should be directed to the National Maritime Center (NMC-4B) at 703-235-8457.

W. C. BENNETT
By direction

Dist: All District Commanders (m)
Commandant (G-MSO-1)
All COs MSOs
All Activity Commanders
All RECs