

U.S. Department
of Transportation

United States
Coast Guard



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National Maritime Center

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16721
NMC-4 Policy Letter 4-99
March 26, 1999

From: Commanding Officer
To: Distribution

Subj: APPROVAL OF STEREO OPTICAL COMPANY FARNSWORTH LANTERN
(FALANT) COLOR PERCEPTION TEST

1. This policy letter provides guidance for accepting color vision tests performed with the Stereo Optical Co. Farnsworth Lantern Color Perception Test (FALANT). The FALANT was originally developed at the Naval Submarine Medical Research Laboratory and has been the U.S. Coast Guard's test for the color vision of military inductees. The Army, Air Force, Navy and Merchant Marine Academies also use the FALANT as the final validating color vision test. It provides a reliable and easy to administer test that separates persons with acceptable color vision from those with severe color deficiencies that would hamper them in performing tasks that require good color vision.

2. After many years of use, the original FALANTs have been wearing out. In the intervening years the cost of new units has risen dramatically. In 1992, Stereo Optical Co. Inc. of Chicago, IL, developed an improved FALANT of its own design and constructed of materials different from the original specification. The Stereo Optical Company's version of the FALANT has been evaluated by the Medical Review Board and accepted as equal to the original FALANT. Successful color vision tests administered by this improved FALANT may be accepted as meeting the color vision test requirements for applicants for mariner credentials. This information will be added to the regulations in a future revision.

3. Questions concerning the above policy should be directed to the National Maritime Center (NMC-4C) at (703) 235-8483.

W. C. BENNETT
By direction

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